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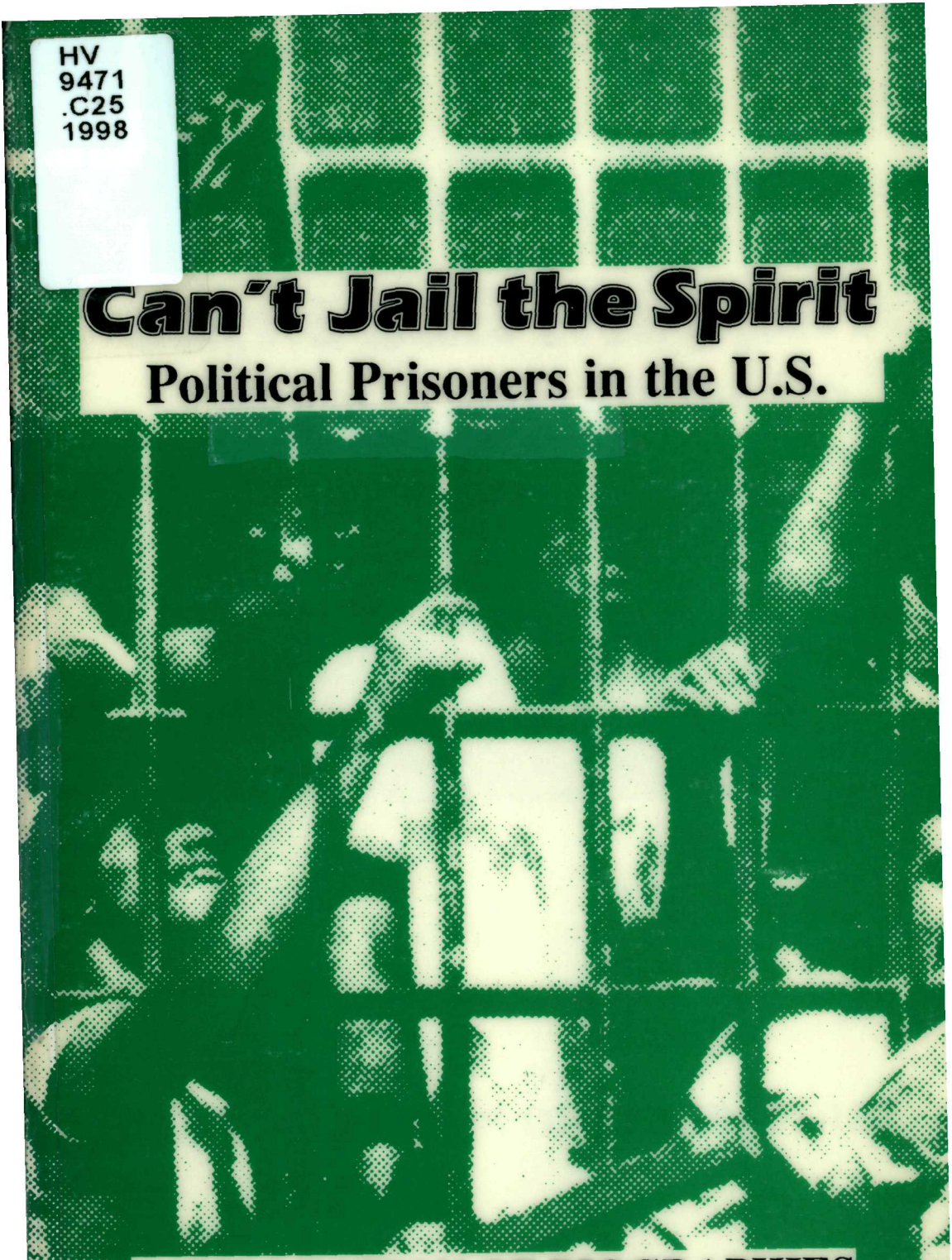
Can't Jail the Spirit

Political Prisoners in the U.S.



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Can't jail the spirit

Can't Jail the Spirit

Political Prisoners in the U.S.

Fourth Edition

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How Was This Book Assembled?

The first edition of this book was produced in 1988 as a photocopied set of pages. Several of us in Chicago, working in the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War and the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown, had grown tired of the denials that there were no political prisoners. What better remedy to this, we thought, than to assemble the stories and photographs of these prisoners? If political prisoners did not exist, then who were these people?

That first edition was a massive success. We thus published a second edition, now as a formal book, in large part financed by the Prisoners of Conscience Project, directed by the Rev. Michael Yasutake. The third and fourth editions followed, the latter appearing in 1992. Now, six years later, with Jericho '98 facing us, it seemed only logical and necessary to publish the next edition — and that is what you are reading. Ten years later, the same group of people who assembled and published the first four editions is still at it — now publishing the fifth. Far more importantly, most of the prisoners who were included in that first edition remain in their cells — still languishing in the belly of the beast. Of course, there are some wonderful exceptions like Dhoruba Bin Wahad, Geromino ji Jaga Pratt, Kazi Toure, Jaime Delgado, Herman Ferguson, Dora Garcia, Alan Berkman, Barbara Curzi, Patricia Gros, Carol Manning, Ed Mead, etc. but — painfully, the pattern remains.

In past editions the question of who was a political prisoner and a prisoner of war, and thus belonged in this book, was settled in various ways. Of course, no such rule has ever satisfied everyone and always some people were unhappy with various decisions. Given the incredible strength of the people involved, these disagreements were never easy. For this edition, the rule has been a simple one: we have employed the list generated by the Jericho 98 Campaign. This list will be no more or less "correct" than previous lists, but at least the process is straight-forward for those of us who have compiled this edition. As must be apparent by now, *Can't Jail the Spirit* will continue to appear over the years and the specific people who are included in the book will no doubt change a bit as the editions grow. If you have any thoughts on these matters, please let us know.

The autobiographies in this edition were obtained by writing to the people on the Jericho '98 list and requesting an entry for the book. If a person did not submit a bio but one had appeared in some previous edition, then the existing one was included. The last pages in the book contain a list of the names and addresses of those prisoners on the list for whom we did not have bios to include in this edition.

The introductory pieces should be self-explanatory and, we hope, helpful in setting a context for the people included in this book, as well as the larger issues of prisons, repression, white supremacy, and colonialism. Most importantly, we hope that these pieces will create

a clear link between those in this book, the other 1.7 million incarcerated people in this country, and oppressed people everywhere.

If you like *CJTS* and want further issues to appear, please purchase many copies (at $15 each) and/or make contributions. This book is not financed by the United States government!

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The following is a list of prisoners who appear in this edition, but whose biographies have not been updated since the last edition (1992) so some of their information may be out of date.

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PREFACE

Political prisoners or prisoners of conscience whose stories are contained in this book, *Can't Jail the Spirit,* have been convicted unjustly as "criminals" by the governmental forces in the U.S. not because they did wrong, but because they did right by working to empower the powerless and the poor and standing up for their rights as human beings. Puerto Rican political prisoners and prisoners of war seek independence for their nation of Puerto Rico, still a colony of, and exploited, by the U.S. The American Indian Movement prisoners and African American political prisoners seek self determination for their people. The list goes on of these and other political prisoners. Our Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project support them in their right to their belief, association and action for a just society without being persecuted, which they are.

The famous Russian writer Feodor Dostoevsky wrote that if we are to understand our society we need to look at its prisons. I take this to mean that we need to view our society from the point of view of those who are considered the least among us - the powerless, the rejected and the poor- a high proportion of whom are people of color. Those in prisons certainly are among those regarded as the least in our society. In the U.S. now, there are 1 1/2 million prisoners, the highest prisoner population in the world and still growing by leaps and bounds.

When still outside and in their communities, the political prisoners identified with the least in their society. Now from inside the prison they are protesting against violations of human rights of all others in prisons with them. The politically aware prisoners communicate the truth to those of us "outside," often at the expense of being further punished, about oppressive prison conditions and inhumane treatments not only against themselves but against other prisoners. We have the facts from those victimized rather than from the keeper of prisons to help us organize toward ending human rights violations in prison and judicial systems in the U.S.

The hundredth year anniversary in 1998 of the U.S. conquest of Puerto Rico and Hawaii, among other nations, is an opportune time for us in the "outside" to join forces with political people inside prisons in struggle against all forms of colonialism and for justice. Such spirit cannot be contained and stopped. The title of this book "*Can't Jail the Spirit*" aptly describes the enduring spirit of the political prisoners - prisoners of conscience. The readers are invited to join this community of spirit of resistance against repression and in struggle for justice for all.

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JERICHO
98
THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR
AMNESTY AND FREEDOM FOR ALL U.S.
POLITICAL PRISONERS AND POWS!
Woodcut: Laura Whitehorn, Political Prisoner -- Flyer design: FireWorx

INTRODUCTION

Sacrifice is an intricate part of a people's struggle for freedom, justice and independence. An inherent part of this sacrifice is the death of the I for the we and the me for the us. Jericho 98, a national mobilization and educational campaign to gain amnesty and freedom for ALL political prisoners, seeks to gain this for not any one individual political prisoner, but rather, all political prisoners regardless of organizational, ethnic or racial delineation.

From the time Europeans stepped ashore on the land now called the United States of America they have been actively engaged in warfare against the indigenous people of this hemisphere and the indigenous people have been defending their right to be free and independent. Today those struggles are still going on and we have Chicano and Native Americans fighting for freedom and independence and we have Chicano and Native American political prisoners and prisoners of war.

The people of these United States came to these shores, for the most part, escaping the tyranny, repression and oppression of Great Britain. Escaping religious persecution, debtor's prison, involuntary servitude, etc. only turn around and foist the same forms of oppression off on first the indigenous people of this continent, and later on the Afrikans and Puerto Ricans and other people of color. Were they/are they suppose to suffer these indignities quietly?

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

When a people recognizes that a change is necessary and mandatory for the common good and can no longer suffer such indignities quietly, they engage in revolutionary struggle,

a struggle to bring about a qualitative and quantitative change in the condition of the people. In such struggle we suffer losses, losses of lives as well as the capture of our combatants, organizers as well as soldiers. What Jericho 98 seeks to do is put in place a mechanism to free these political prisoners and prisoners of war. This mechanism has to take into account the fact that as long as there are liberation struggles and/or struggles to end oppression, in all its forms, going on in this country there will be political prisoners. The strategy for addressing their existence and freedom has to include an understanding of why the care and treatment of and support for political prisoners is such an intricate part of any liberation struggle. We have one common enemy, U.S. racism, colonialism, imperialism and capitalism. We have to build a unified/common response to it. The U.S. categorically denies the existence of political prisoners inside of its prisons and jails because it denies there are liberation struggles going on inside its borders.

Together we can and must crash the wall of silence and build a structure to gain recognition, amnesty and freedom for all political prisoners. They are coming home, one at a time, but that's too little too late. WE have to build this movement in a scientifically sound manner that will for once and for all allow our captured combatants and political prisoners to know that we're finally ready to move our struggle forward and build a strong, coherent movement that says to our youth, "...if you join this fight you will not be left alone to rot in prison. We will stand by you, we will fight for you, we will Free you! This is a wall to wall struggle! This is a struggle where if we stand together and persevere we will emerge victorious!"

Finally, a lot of our brothers and sisters have made enormous sacrifices for our struggle, the least we can do is remember their names and get to know their faces. In this book are some of them...

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A CALL TO REFLECTION— A CALL TO ACTION

1998:

A Praxis on Colonialism

The Case of the Mexicans and Puerto Ricans - Two People, One Destiny

1998 marks two infamous anniversaries for the two largest Latino groups in what is called the United States; for Mexicans, 150 years since the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and for Puerto Ricans 100 years since the US invasion of their island.

On February 2, 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed; a humiliated and defeated Mexico accepted the Rio Grande as the border with Texas and ceded California, Nevada, New Mexico and parts of Colorado, Arizona and Utah to the United States. Thus the jewel on the crown of the expansionist and imperial design known as Manifest Destiny was set in place. The country, which in 1776, had declared itself independent from colonial domination, had now become the world's major colonizer. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, like all treaties which the United States had entered into with Native Americans, was not to be enforced as far as the native inhabitants were concerned; as the great Puerto Rican Nationalist, Pedro Albizu Campos would say, "the United States wants the cage but not the bird." This sentiment echoed the words of the Mexican diplomat Manuel Cresción Regón, who at the time of the signing of the Treaty, who said: "...our race, our unfortunate people will have to wander in search of hospitality in a strange land, only to be ejected later. Descendants of the Indians that we are, the North Americans hate us, their spokesperson deprecates us, even if they recognize the justice of our cause, they consider us unworthy to form with them one nation and one society, they clearly manifest that their future expansion begins with the territory that they took from us and pushing (sic) aside our citizens who inhabit the land."

While the Treaty was lofty in its promises for the Mexican people in the occupied area, guaranteeing them "the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens of United States," the stark reality was another. Through all kinds of machinations — legal and illegal — Mexicans became citizens without any language prerequisite; in other words, Mexicans became

1898
Essolube
MOTOR OIL
The turning point
or 'Porto Rico'
GRAND UNI
EL IMPARCIAL
AVIACION
BOMBARDEA
EN UTUADO
REVELAN PLAN NACIONA
NUEVOS TIROTEO
YAGUEZ Y AR
LA REBELION EN LAS PAGINAS 2, 3,
HIGUILLAR ES
RESIDENTE

citizens of the US through an international treaty which superseded national law. As they were not required to have any knowledge of the English language, at that very moment the US legally became a bilingual country: English and Spanish. If these new citizens were to enjoy the blessings of the Constitution, then the US had to become an English and Spanish speaking country. Yet the promise was never kept; instead through poll taxes and local laws requiring English literacy, Mexicans were totally disenfranchised from the body politic.

Thus began the Mexican sojourn into internal colonialism. Mexicans were now to be excluded from the civil society. The usual pattern of US federalism was initiated, i.e. the incorporation of the land by the settlers and the exclusion of the native inhabitants. It should be noted that no state has entered the Union since the adoption of the Constitution at the initiative of the native inhabitants of the territory. Instead, it has been the settlers who have petitioned for incorporation. A perfect example of this occurred in the cases of Hawaii and Alaska. By the time of incorporation, the native population had been reduced to an insignificant percentage.

Mexicans, on the other side of the US-imposed border, never recognized it as a legal border. As a matter of fact, in 1922, a report to the US Secretary of Labor reads: "The psychology of the average Mexican unskilled worker from Mexico is that when he enters in any manner into the United States that he is only paying a visit to an unknown portion of his own country. He is independent and does not consider he is an immigrant alien, but rather in what is termed the United States by right of birth and possession, the country of his forebears, the territory acquired after the War of 1846 and the territory subsequently ceded in 1854 known as the Gadsen Purchase. To him there is no real or imaginary line."

It is clear that historically Mexicans have denied the existence of the border; they don't see themselves as coming illegally into the US, for it is the US that crossed the border illegally into Mexico. The recent anti-Mexican hysteria in this country embodied in the passage of Proposition 187 in California is an acknowledgment of this reality by sectors of the establishment. In other words, it is clear to the Pete Wilsons of this country that a "Mexican problem" exists. Their answer to the "Mexican Problem" is to deport them, to construct the "Tortilla Curtain." These efforts are to no avail. There is a historical problem created 150 years ago which needs to be resolved and no racist legislation, no tortilla curtain, no militarization of the so-called border, no attacks on bilingual education, no attempts to set back the clock on representation by the challenging of congressional districts, no moves to continue to seize Mexican's natural wealth as evidenced by NAFTA at the expense of the indigenous and popular masses of Mexico, can stave off the final solution: a Mexican Solution to the Mexican National Question.

For the past 150 years, Mexicans on both sides of the so-called border have resisted and attempted to come up with a Mexican solution from the earliest resistance of Father José Martínez, Tiburicio Vázquez and Las Gorras Blancas, to efforts by LULAC, Mexican Newspapers, and the Pachucos, to the Chicano/Mexicano movements of the past decades. All

these efforts have cost the Mexican people dearly. Despite the imprisonment, lynchings, exile and danger to their lives, this resistance has been kept alive through the dangerous memories transmitted from generation to generation.

Just as there is no answer to the 150 year-old "Mexican Problem" that is not a Mexican solution, there is no solution to the 100 year-old "Puerto Rican Problem" that is not a Puerto Rican solution.

On July 25, 1898, Nelson Miles invaded the island of Puerto Rico through the southern port of Guanica. Ever since then, Puerto Rico has been designated by the US Supreme Court as an area "belonging to, but not part of, the US." In other words, Puerto Rico has been a possession of the United States, literally a non-incorporated territory. As a result of the adoption of the Jones Act, Puerto Ricans were made US citizens in 1917, and, like Mexicans in 1848, were not required to possess prior knowledge of English as a prerequisite for US citizenship. For Puerto Ricans on the island it has meant nothing more than they had to pay the highest tax exacted from any human being — a blood tax. Puerto Ricans now had the "right" to fight in US wars but had no right to representation. Remember the slogan that inspired and fueled the revolution of 1776: taxation without representation is tyranny.

For 100 years, Puerto Ricans have never been consulted as to their political status. Even though the structure of the island's government has undergone a series of reform efforts from the Foraker Act of 1900, to the Jones Act of 1917, to Law 600 in 1950, and finally to the creation of the ELA (Free Associated State) in 1952, the question of the sovereignty of Puerto Rico is in the hands of the US Congress. According to the Treaty of Paris of December 10, 1898, the US Congress is the only entity which can decide the political fate of Puerto Rico.

While every attempt has been made to de-nationalize and de- "Puerto Ricanize" Puerto Rico, Puerto Ricans have resisted. Puerto Rican resistance has taken many forms, from direct political action, to cultural resistance and civil disobedience. For their resistance, like Mexicans, Puerto Ricans have had to pay a very heavy price, including massacres, bombings, imprisonment and assassination of their people. This repression is exemplified by the fact that today in US prisons there are 15 Puerto Rican men and women serving disproportionate sentences for their activities on behalf of Puerto Rico's right to be a free and independent nation, to actualize themselves as a free people.

In this year that marks 100 years of colonialism for Puerto Ricans and 150 years for Mexicans, we are calling upon all our Latino brothers and sisters, as well as all freedom-loving peoples, to join us in a praxis on colonialism, to reflect upon these long years of mental, physical, cultural and psychological imposition of colonialism, as well as the cultures of resistance which have continually fought against it.

In that context, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans have made a call to all Latino cultural workers (poets, musicians, journalists, graphic artists, muralists, dramatists), teachers or lawyers, engineers or doctors; children in the streets, women at work, or youth in schools. Paint murals, write poetry, write and direct plays, create videos, hold teach-ins; whatever you

do, organize in the name of anti-colonial resistance, keeping in mind these questions: What have these many years of colonialism meant to you? What does it mean for our future? How are issues of the attacks on immigrants (i.e. Proposition 187), gentrification, criminalization of youth, criminal injustice, the National Question, political prisoners, police brutality interrelated with this reality?

It is within the spirit of protesting these invasions and celebrating our resistance that we are supporting three major events this year:

- Jericho 98: a mobilization to Washington DC on March 27, 1998 to demand the release of all Political Prisoners in US prisons.
- Puerto Rico 98: No to the Colony: Freedom for the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners; a mobilization to Washington DC on July 25, 1998, coinciding with a massive concentration in Guanica, Puerto Rico, as well as simultaneous programs in Boston, New York City, San Francisco and Chicago, to protest 100 years of US colonialism in Puerto Rico and demand the release of Puerto Rican Political Prisoners.
- A NationalDay Without Latinos: October 12, 1998
  150 Years and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo:
  A People Without Borders; and, A National Day of Reflection and Action in all US cities with sizable Latino populations.

It is also within this spirit that we in the Puerto Rican independence movement — presently under vicious attack by an FBI-led COINTELPRO operation and facing the imminent adoption of the pro-statehood Young Bill by the US Congress — are pleased to join in the effort of publishing this new edition of *Can't Jail the Spirit.*

Jose Lopez
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THE CONTINUING CRIME OF BLACK IMPRISONMENT

This article was written two years ago. Since then the number of people in prison has risen to 1.2 million. Everything else is just the same -- except all the imprisonment numbers as of this writing, in January of 1998, are 20% higher.

The least controversial observation that one can make about American criminal justice today is that it is remarkably ineffective, absurdly expensive, grossly inhumane, and riddled with discrimination. The beating of Rodney King was a reminder of the ruthlessness and racism that characterize many big city police departments. But the other aspects of the justice system, especially sentencing practices and prison conditions, are every bit as harsh and unfair.[1]

The Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML) was founded in 1985 to fight against the brutality of the United States Penitentiary at Marion. In 1987, we wrote that by the year 2000 the U.S. might have 1,000,000 people in prison. At that time U.S. prisons held 561,000 people, and most of our friends thought the notion of 1,000,000 prisoners was foolish.

In the Fall of 1994, the U.S. announced that it sent its millionth human being to prison in June,[2] more than five years sooner than the projection that was considered foolish just a few years ago. What we would like to do in this paper is examine the growth of imprisonment in the U.S. We will then analyze the nature of crime, and then the relationship between crime and imprisonment. Since crime and imprisonment are in fact not closely related, we will conclude the article by discussing why the U.S. is sending so many people to prison.

IMPRISONMENT

In addition to a million people in prison, there are those in jails (about 500,000), those on parole (about 600,000), those on probation (about 3,000,000) and those in juvenile facilities (about 100,000).[3] It is difficult to grasp the enormity of these numbers. For example, the number of people in prison would comprise the 9th largest city in the U.S. The number of people who are incarcerated in jails and prisons is greater than the number of people who live in 13 states.[4] The number of people under the control of the "criminal" "justice" system is almost two times larger than the number of people who live in Nicaragua or Chicago. The number of people in the U.S. who were arrested last year (14,000,000) is much larger than the population of Cuba.

Placing a million human beings in prison is an extraordinary landmark, the number of prisoners today being about five times larger than it was 20 years ago. This growth has more than kept up with the population. Between 1925 (when official imprisonment statistics were first organized) and 1971, the

imprisonment rate remained on the order of about 100 per 100,000. Then, in 1972, the imprisonment rate began to soar and is still soaring. Figure 1. shows this trend. Today the imprisonment rate is 373 (per 100,000 population), almost four times higher than it was in 1972.[5]

International Comparisons

In 1991 the Sentencing Project, an independent organization based in Washington D.C., issued a report authored by Marc Mauer, its assistant director, entitled "Americans Behind Bars: A Comparison of International Rates of Incarceration."[6] The report, which used data from 1989 and 1990, found that the U.S. had the highest incarceration rate in the world (426) compared to a distant second South Africa (333) and third, the Soviet Union (268).[7]

Incredibly, when the report was revised using data from one year later, the gap had widened,[8] and was wider still one year later.[9] In 1992 the U.S. had an incarceration rate of 519 compared to South Africa's rate of 368. Furthermore, in 1990 the incarceration rate for Black men in the U.S. was 3,109 compared to 729 for Black men in South Africa. In 1992 this differential had increased: the rates were, respectively, 3,822 and 851. Thus, in 1990 the incarceration rate for Black men in the U.S. was 4.3 times greater than the rate for Black men in South Africa. Two years later that ratio had increased to 4.5.

Table 1 provides some of the incarceration rates assembled by Mauer. Among other observations, it is interesting to note that the competition between Washington, D.C. and Moscow continues as the newly formed country of Russia has just overtaken the U.S. as the country with the highest imprisonment rate in the world.

Table 1. Incarceration Rates (Number of People in Prisons and Jails, per 100,000 Population) for Selected Countries, 1992-1993.[10]

Country	Rate of Incarceration
Russia	558
United States	519
South Africa	368
Thailand	159
Canada	116
Mexico	97
England/Wales	93
Portugal	93
Australia	91
Switzerland	85
France	84
Brazil	84
Germany	80
Italy	80
Belgium	71
Sweden	69
Denmark	66
Netherlands	49

U.S. Prisons — in Black and White

Consider the racial nature of imprisonment in the U.S. Using U.S. Census and estimates derived from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, we have calculated imprisonment rates (we are now using only people in prison for these calculations) as of June 1994. These are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Imprisonment Rates in the United States, 1994

Group	Rate	Compared to White Rate
Total	373	2.1
White	176	1.0
Hispanic	686	3.9
Black	1489	8.5

We can see from the table that Black people are 8.5 times more likely and that Hispanic people are 3.9 times more likely to go to prison than are White people.

Further examination of these statistics reveals the depth of their meaning. For example, if instead of the usual per 100,000 people, we employ percentages (per 100 people), we see that 1.489% of all Black people (and 0.176% of all White people) will be in prison at any given moment. Using census data we can calculate related figures: 3.0% of all Black males will be in prison on a given day in 1994 as will 6.0% of all Black men aged 18-44 and 7.6% of all Black men aged 25-29.

We can also consider some other research findings:

* In 1992 there were more Black men in prison (583,000) than in college (537,000)[11]
* One out of every four Black men will go to prison in his lifetime[12]
* 30% of Black men aged 20-29 in Chicago were arrested in 1993[13]
* 42% of Black men aged 18-35 in Washington, D.C. were under some form of criminal justice control in 1992[14]
* 56% of Black men aged 18-35 in Baltimore were under some form of criminal justice control in 1992[15]

The New Crime Bill

A new "crime" bill has just been passed by Congress. This bill will render the horrific numbers discussed above small by comparison. In addition to adding scores of new crimes punishable by the death penalty, the goals of this new "crime initiative" involve: placing 100,000 more police on the streets; increasing conviction rates; increasing the proportion of convictions resulting in imprisonment; requiring those imprisoned to serve at least 85% of their sentences ("truth in sentencing"); and incarcerating "three-time losers" for the rest of their lives.

Political scientists and criminologists have started to estimate the impact that this bill will have on imprisonment. John Irwin and James Austin, two criminologists who often prepare publications for the prestigious National Council on Crime and Delinquency, have estimated in their new book entitled *It's About Time*[16] that a package of laws such as those included in the new crime bill would result in over 9 times as many people being imprisoned. Thus, if we multiply by 9 the 6.0% noted above, we see that well over half of all Black men aged 18-44 would be in prison on any given day if all projected aspects of the new "crime initiative" are implemented. Irwin and Austin note similarly: "[The Crime Bill] would mean that most of the nation's 5.5 million black males

Fig. 1

aged 18-39 would be incarcerated."[17] Other estimates of the potential impact of the crime bill have suggested a smaller but still devastating impact.[18]

There is much that is speculative about this estimate, and that must remain so given the unfolding details of the new crime bill. Other specifics would have to be taken into consideration to refine the estimates above, such as estimating the impact of an aging prison population, determining how much of the "crime" bill will actually be funded, etc. Whatever these refinements, the numbers will remain staggering. Never before has any society at any time used imprisonment in this fashion. The impact that this will have on the Black community is difficult even to fathom.

Finances

Much has been written about the financing of the "criminal" "justice" system (CJS). Just a few figures here will suffice. Funding for the CJS has increased seven-fold over the past 20 years, from $10 billion to $74 billion a year, with $25 billion spent for incarceration.[19] This, however, is all spare change compared to what may follow, depending upon which aspects of the new crime bill are implemented. For example, it has been estimated that the "three-time loser" provision itself will cost $5.7 billion annually and require an additional $21 billion in prison construction costs.[20] It has also been estimated that the crime bill could cost as much as an extra $351 billion over the next ten years.[21]

Since not many of us have this much money in our pockets, or even in our bank accounts, let's try to understand just how much it really is. It costs much more to send a person to prison for a year than it does to send that person to Harvard. In fact, it costs

more to send a person to prison than it would to support a family of four. Interestingly, about 300,000 families of four or 1.2 million people could live for what it will cost just to implement the new three-time loser laws. Noting the surging hunger in the U.S., the Bread for the World Institute has just determined that $10 billion would be enough to expand the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) food program to assure that there were no longer any hungry people in this category.[22] This is less than two years of payments for the three-time loser law. Or, consider this; according to a report from the American Bar Association,[23] all the state taxes of 18 average taxpayers in Delaware are required to keep one person in prison for a year; and the money spent to build a prison in Wisconsin would pay for 11,000 children to attend Head Start.

CRIME

What is Crime?

This is not as simple a question as it appears. For example, there is the street crime that breaks the law and that sometimes results in imprisonment. But most crime does not result in imprisonment, nor is it even considered crime. For example, domestic violence, or the battering of women, is almost never seen as a crime – even though it is estimated that 3 - 4,000,000 women a year in the U.S. are battered by their mates.[24] Waging war is not considered criminal even though the war against Iraq murdered about 500,000 Iraqis. Denying people health care, food or housing also isn't a crime. And it is not a crime to manufacture and sell cigarettes, which each year kill 20 times as many people as guns. We make these points to emphasize that whatever the relationship

Fig. 2

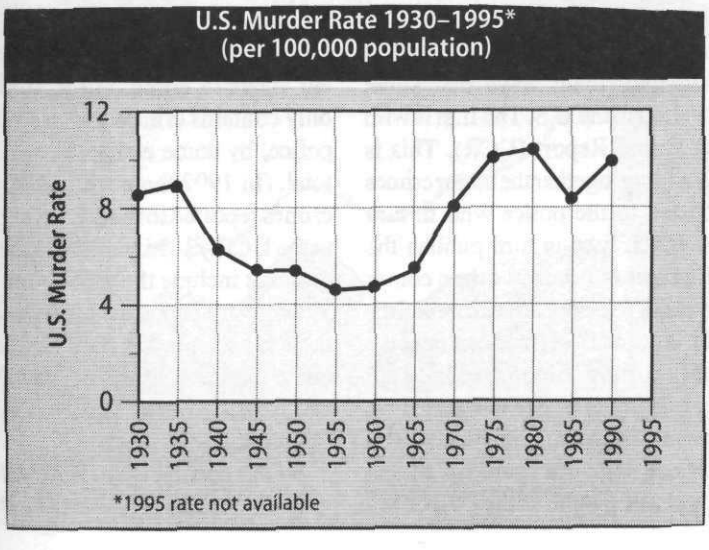
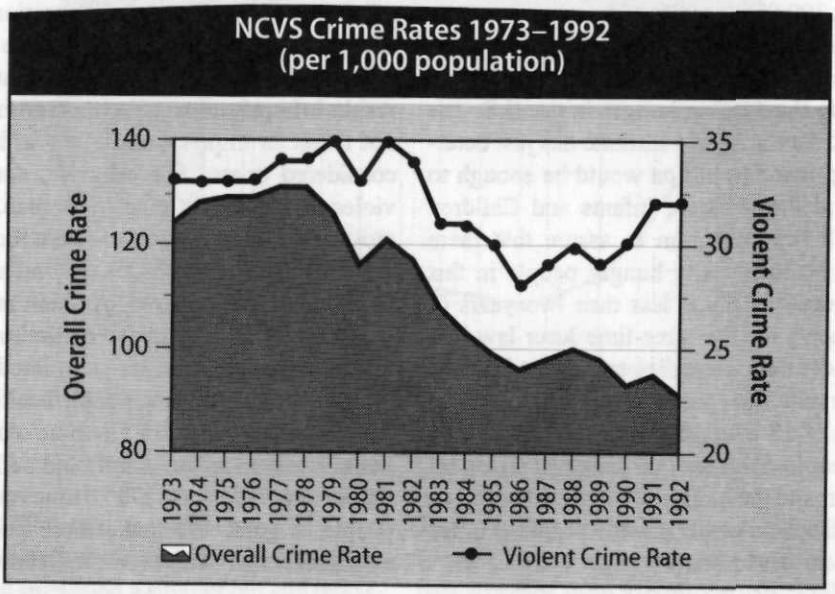


Fig. 3



between crime and imprisonment, it doesn't involve any of these issues.

How is Crime Measured?

There are two main ways that street crime is measured in the U.S. The first is with the Uniform Crime Report (UCR). This is computed by adding together the major crimes that are reported to the police who in turn report to the F.B.I. who in turn publish the findings. The other measure of crime comes from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). About 20 years ago it became clear that only a proportion of crimes are actually reported to the police and that if we wanted a more accurate count, we would have to conduct scientific surveys of the population and ask people if they had been victims of crime. This is what the NCVS does.

Since the UCR and the NCVS measure crime in different ways, they present different views of crime. For example, the UCR only contains crimes that are reported to the police, by some estimates only 40% of the total. (In 1992 there were about 34,000,000 crimes reported to the NCVS and 13,000,000 to the UCR.)[25] On the other hand, the NCVS does not include the crime murder (since its victim can't report it) nor crimes for which there is no reporting victim, like most drug-related crimes. Also not included are all white collar crimes, like the savings and loan frauds, and much more.

Let's look at each. But first let's look at murder since this is the easiest to measure

and thus is the crime we know most about. About 25,000 people were murdered in the U.S. last year. As Figure 2 shows, the murder rate in the U.S. was about 10 (per 100,000 population) in 1930 and about 10 in 1990 — almost no change at all in 60 years.[26] Similarly, the murder rate in 1993 (9.3) was just about what it was in 1973 (9.4).[27]

Has Crime Been Increasing?

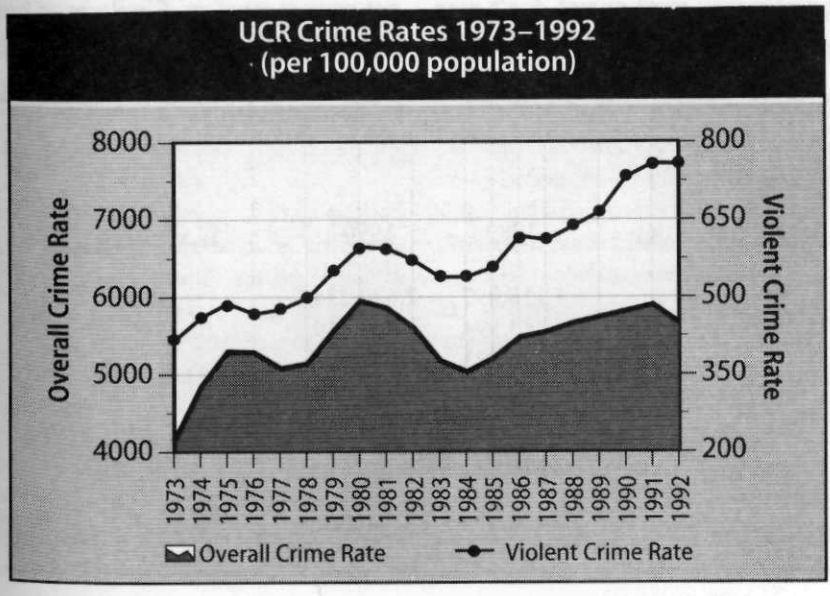
Figure 3 shows crime that is measured by the NCVS.

As you can see, since 1973, when the NCVS was initiated,[28] the index of all NCVS crimes has decreased rather steadily while the violent crime index has stayed constant. Figure 4 shows crime that is measured by the UCR, also since 1973. Here an uneven pattern of increases and decreases is present for all crimes while violent crimes increased steadily and dramatically.[29 30]

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRIME AND IMPRISONMENT

Few matters are as clear as the answer to the question: "Is there a relationship between crime and imprisonment?" Virtually everyone, from criminologists to wardens to social scientists to specially appointed task forces, answers the question the same way: "No." We would like to sketch just some of the arguments which illustrate this lack of relationship.

Fig. 4



1) Let us consider the data presented above. We can see that over the past 20 years one measure of crime (the NCVS) has decreased by 26% and the other measure (the UCR) has increased about 47%, and the imprisonment rate has increased by 200%. In addition, consider the fact that the UCR (Figure 4) increased from 1973 to 1980, decreased from 1980 to 1985, and then increased about the same amount between 1985 and 1990. These changes took place while imprisonment rates spiraled equally upward during both of these intervals (Figure 1). When all of this is added together, it is clear that putting enormous numbers of people into prison has not reduced the crime rate. A recent report from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency[31] presents these data in a summary form that is reproduced in Table 3.

2) Consider the funnel effect, which demonstrates why most crimes don't even come into contact with the criminal justice system. Joan Petersilia, former president of the American Society of Criminology, and an employee of the conservative Rand Corporation, in an article entitled "Building More Prison Cells Won't Make a Safer Society," notes: "Of the approximately 34 million serious felonies in 1990, 31 million never entered the criminal justice system because they were either unreported or unsolved." Thus, she continues, only 10% of all crime ever entered the courts, about half of these resulted in convictions, and about a third of these resulted in imprisonment — less than 2% of the total amount of crime.[32]

3) Over half of all murders are committed by people known to the victim. In addition, virtually all murder is committed in fits of passion that are immune to rational consideration of consequences. We are not saying that murderers should not be incarcerated. We are saying that incarceration will not prevent murders. Similarly, it has been demonstrated again and again that the death

Table 3. Changes in Correctional Populations Between 1980 and 1990.

Population	1980	1990	% Change
Probation	1,118,097	2,670,234	139
Jails	163,994	403,019	146
Prisons	329,821	771,243	134
Parole	220,438	531,403	141
Total	1,832,350	4,375,903	139
UCR Index Crimes	13,400,000	14,500,000	8

penalty does not deter murder. These latter observations are illustrated by the data in Figure 2, which shows that the murder rate has remained more-or-less constant over the past 60 years, through periods of little imprisonment and through periods of massive imprisonment; through periods of the use of the death penalty and through periods when the death penalty was not used.

4) Consider the question of supply. There is a virtually unlimited supply of people who will commit crimes associated with drugs. As soon as one person is removed from the labor market, another replaces him or her. Prisons will never be able to dent this supply.

5) Virtually all experts agree that prisons cause people to become even more deeply embedded in a life of crime. Recidivism rates are over 50% within three years in most states.[33] [34]

6) The following comments are by people in the field who one would expect to be supportive of imprisonment. Thus their denials of the impact of imprisonment on crime merit attention:

* By a criminologist: "Incapacitation appears to have been only slightly more effective in averting crimes in the early 1980s than in the 1970s, despite a near doubling of the U.S. prison populations in less than ten years."[35]
* From the Correctional Association of New York: "The state's new policies have been staggeringly expensive, have threatened a crisis of safety and manageability in the prison system, and have failed to reduce the rate of crime or even stop its increase. After almost ten years of getting tough the citizens of New York are more likely to be victims of crime today than in 1971. Moreover, the largest rise in crime came at the end of the decade, during 1980-81, well after the introduction of more severe sentencing practices."[36]
* Even the Director of Corrections of Alabama understands this situation: "We're on a train that has to be turned around. It doesn't make any sense to pump millions and millions into corrections and have no effect on the crime rate."[37]
* Finally, from Robert Gangi, current Director of the Correction Association of New York: "Building more prisons to address crime is like building more graveyards to address a fatal disease."[38]

One last study on this topic must be noted before moving ahead. Justice Fellowship, the organization founded by Chuck Colson (of Watergate infamy), commissioned a special report to determine how much prisons deterred crime. Their findings were so non-supportive of prisons that they were reduced to this sarcastic attack:

Incarceration rates are such a poor predictor of crime rates that researchers would find proximity [of states] to Canada more reliable. Eight of the 12 states that border on Canada rank in the bottom 20 in

overall crime rates. Even alphabetical order is more reliable [than incarceration rates] when predicting crime rates: Three states among the first 15 alphabetically rank in the bottom two-fifths of crime rates.[39]

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

We have examined imprisonment, crime, and the relationship between the two. What can a reasonable person conclude?

Elliott Currie has written an insightful book on crime and imprisonment.[40] In this book, Currie poses the question why the U.S. keeps pumping billions of dollars into the CJS, which everyone, he acknowledges, knows doesn't work: "If we know as much about crime as I think we do, why haven't we already acted on that knowledge more consistently and constructively."[41] In other words, Currie is asking why the U.S. continues to pursue imprisonment strategies that don't work. The only answer that Currie can find for his question is that the U.S. doesn't understand what the research is showing. This is an extraordinary answer which shows where liberals must wind up on such a question. Here is a system that is spending $74 billion a year and Currie thinks it acts the way it does because it cannot find someone to explain what the research is saying. Let us try another possible answer.

Currie and many others get stuck and can move no further because they assume that the purpose of the criminal justice system is to prevent crime. Consider a quote from another leading liberal in "criminal" "justice" reform, Norval Morris, a professor of law at the University of Chicago who has written excellent articles and books critiquing the CJS: "The whole law-and-order movement that we've heard so much about is, in operation, anti-black and anti-underclass. Not in plan, not in design, not in intent, but in operation."[42] Thus, also according to Morris, the direction of the CJS is an accident.

If liberal critics of the CJS would just turn the problem around and not ask why the CJS fails at its stated purpose but rather ask what purposes a system like this could have, then they could find an answer. Let us examine Table 4 which presents the characteristics of the CJS that have been established above:

Table 4. Characteristics of the "Crimi-nal" "Justice" System

1. The process of mass incarceration started in 1972.
2. The CJS spends many billions of dollars every year caging millions of people.
3. The cages are filled with people of color, most of them Black.
4. The system does not prevent crime.
5. The system does not rehabilitate people.
6. We know of many other measures that would prevent crime.

We would suggest that a system with these characteristics might be seen, not as a crime prevention system, but as a system whose foremost purpose is to control of people of color. Remember what events preceded the growth in imprisonment that

started in 1972. That year followed in the midst of the F.B.I.'s COINTELPRO program; the assassination of dozens of leaders of the Black Liberation Movement and the imprisoning of hundreds more; the assassination of George Jackson on August 21, 1971; and the rebellion at Attica on September 9 – 13, 1971. Then just a few months later, the imprisonment rate started to spiral upwards and has not yet stopped doing so. Furthermore, 1972 was also the year that the first Control Unit was opened — as one wing of the U.S. Penitentiary at Marion.

When this historical context is added to the statistics about crime and imprisonment and the rampant racism of U.S. society, it seems clear that the hypothesis that prisons are institutions for control of people of color is a far more viable one than the notion that prisons are an effort to prevent crime. In fact, the only support for the latter hypothesis would appear to be the assertions of some of those who run the prison system and politicians.

It seems worthwhile to elaborate on this point. There is no viable evidence that prisons prevent crime. There is an abundance of evidence, a small proportion of it presented above, that prisons don't and can't prevent crime. In addition, every serious analysis of the history of incarceration reveals the same historical thrust: prisons and other systems of punishment are for social control, not crime control. For example, in 1939 Rusche and Kirchheimer wrote a very important book showing that the systems of imprisonment throughout history were simply reflections of the economic systems that existed at given times. These systems were not about crime prevention; they were about the relations of production.[43] Foucault, in his seminal book, *Discipline & Punish*, has shown that the evolution of state punishment had little to do with crime and everything to do with the exertion of the state to maintain its power: "... one would be forced to suppose that the prison, and no doubt punishment in general, is not intended to eliminate offenses, but rather to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them,"[44] or: "We are aware of all the inconveniences of prison, and that it is dangerous when it is not useless. And yet one cannot 'see' how to replace it. It is the detestable solution, which one seems unable to do without."[45]

CEML believes that one of the main functions of progressive struggle is to counter the prevailing ideology. If this is correct, then fighting to establish the real purpose of the "criminal" "justice" system is meaningful work. At the same time, it is not easy work, to say the least. Many progressive publications show no understanding of or interest in these issues. We in CEML have often posed the slogan "Not One More Cell," only to be opposed by other progressive people. When we have asked why they disagree, they note that crime is a serious problem and we have to offer some solutions. We couldn't agree more that crime is a serious problem and that solutions are needed. But prisons have nothing to do with preventing crime. They haven't; they don't; and they can't — ever. Until we all understand this and have the courage to put forward the notion that we need real solutions, not diversions which are nothing more than racist

attacks on people of color, we will not be able to move our pursuits for a human society any further.

This gives us still one more reason to fight against law and order hysteria and the racist use of imprisonment in our society. Rather than devoting our resources and energies to proven failed strategies like the use of massive imprisonment, we should instead pursue those strategies which will build a truly human society and thus prevent crime. These strategies include struggling to eliminate white supremacy and poverty while building an economy that meets human needs rather than the desires of profiteers. Rather than creating a nation of prisons we should be allowing the emergence of a nation of human beings.

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NATIVE AMERICANS

1868 US GOVERNMENT FORCED TO RECOGNIZE SOVEREIGNTY OF GREAT SIOUX NATION IN FORT LARAMIE TREATY

1973 US GOVERNMENT INVADES INDEPENDENT OGLALA (SIOUX) NATION AT WOUNDED KNEE

LEONARD PELTIER

Native American Political Prisoner

Leonard Peltier is a 44-year-old Anishinabe/Lakota born on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota. Peltier traces the roots of his political activism to the racism and brutal poverty which he witnessed growing up there. In 1958, during a period when the United States was attempting to "terminate" reservations (i.e., unilaterally abrogate the international agreements allocating these lands to Indian people) and relocate Indians to urban ghettos, Peltier joined his relatives in the Pacific Northwest. In 1970, an opportunity presented itself for him to express his aspirations to actively help his people. A group of Indians occupied Ft. Lawton, an abandoned military base in Seattle, Wash. The base was legally Indian land, and Peltier joined the occupiers who were demanding its return. It was here that Peltier first met American Indian Movement (AIM) organizers.

After the occupation ended, Peltier became increasingly active in AIM politics. In 1972, he helped to organize the Trail of Broken Treaties in the Milwaukee, Wis. area. The Trail, a march from reservations across the U.S. to Washington, D.C., intended to focus public attention on the oppression of Indian people, ended, due to dishonesty and incompetence on the part of federal officials, with the occupation and destruction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters. Peltier actively participated in the occupation, acting as security coordinator.

It was following the Trail of Broken Treaties that the FBI targeted the "AIM leadership" for neutralization, either by embroiling them in endless, fabricated court cases or by outright assassination. Upon his return to Milwaukee, Peltier was brutally assaulted by two off-duty policemen and then charged with attempted murder for trying to defend him-

It was following the Trail of Broken Treaties that the FBI targeted the "AIM leadership" for neutralization. . .

self. He spent five months in jail on the charges and went underground soon after making bond. He was later acquitted of the charges and the FBI was implicated in instigating the attack.

During 1973 and 1974, the Northwest AIM Group of which Peltier was a member became increasingly relied upon to provide security for AIM activities. In the spring of 1975, the group established an encampment on the land of the Jumping Bull Family near Oglala, S.D., on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Since 1972, Pine Ridge had been the scene of a massive paramilitary "peacekeeping" operation by then FBI Director William Webster; it was, like the British "peacekeeping" operation in Northern Ireland, actually counterinsurgency warfare. Carried out under FBI direction by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) police and a private army known as the GOONs, this large-scale terrorist operation was directly responsible for the deaths of more than sixty AIM members and supporters and for hundreds of assaults. The Jumping Bull camp was established at the request of Oglala organizers and traditional elders to protect their community from further GOON depredations.

The FBI found the presence of the camp and AIM interference with GOON activities intolerable, but noted that military force would be required to assault the camp. What they lacked was a justification. This was created on June 26, 1975, when FBI Special Agents Jack Coler and Ronald Williams entered the Jumping Bull property to, as one AIM member put it, serve a warrant they didn't have on someone who wasn't there for a crime over which they had no jurisdiction. This rash act precipitated a firefight which eventually involved more than 200 federal troops and left Coler, Williams, and AIM member Joe Stuntz Killsright dead. Despite a massive manhunt characterized by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights as "an over-reaction which takes on the aspects of a vendetta . . .a full-scale military invasion," the FBI was unable to find the participants in the firefight. Eventually, they charged three Northwest AIM members, Leonard Peltier, Bob Robideau, and Dino Butler in the deaths of the agents.

Butler and Robideau were tried in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in July 1976. To the dismay of the FBI and federal prosecutors, the jury, horrified by evidence of FBI complicity in a large-scale campaign of terrorism, found the defendants not guilty on the grounds that they had acted in self-defense. The government vowed to ensure that this did not happen in the case of Leonard Peltier. He was fraudulently extradited from Canada in 1976 and run through a sham trial in the spring of 1977 in Fargo, N.D. Judge Paul Benson cooperated with the FBI in refusing to allow the jury to hear testimony of FBI misconduct and interfering with the cross-examination of prosecution witnesses who were clearly lying. Peltier was found guilty of two counts of

first degree murder on the basis of fabricated evidence and coerced testimony. He was sentenced to two consecutive life terms. His conviction has been upheld through two rounds of appeals despite FOIA documents proving that the FBI lied concerning the most important evidence presented by the prosecution and an admission by DA Lynn Crooks that he "couldn't prove who shot those agents."

Peltier was sent directly to USP Marion, disproving recent media allegations that it is used only for prisoners who have committed crimes in prison. Peltier continued to function as an activist within the "super-max" prison. He, his family, and his supporters participated in the struggle for prisoners' rights and were in the forefront during the hunger strike, work stoppage, marches, and rallies of the early 1980s. In April 1984, Leonard, Standing Deer, and Albert Garza began a spiritual fast to call attention to the systematic denial of religious rights at Marion. Leonard was transferred to Springfield Medical Center and eventually to Leavenworth, where he remains today.

Peltier's uncompromising resistance fueled the growth of an international movement which has focused attention not only on his case but upon broader issues of indigenous land rights and POWs/political prisoners in the U.S. Millions of individuals have written letters and signed petitions demanding a new trial, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu, fifty members of the U.S. Congress, and fifty-one members of the Canadian Parliament. Mikhail Gorbachev evoked a wave of protest from the U.S. press when he responded to Reagan's "human rights agenda" by suggesting the U.S. clean up its human rights violations, citing Indians in general and Leonard Peltier in particular.

Currently, Peltier supporters are calling for a Congressional investigation into the FBI's criminal activity which led to his imprisonment. In light of recent revelations of FBI misconduct, public support for such an investigation is growing. As Leonard has recently said, "We still have a long way to go, but my heart is strong, knowing that one day I will be free, as will all political prisoners, as will all people."

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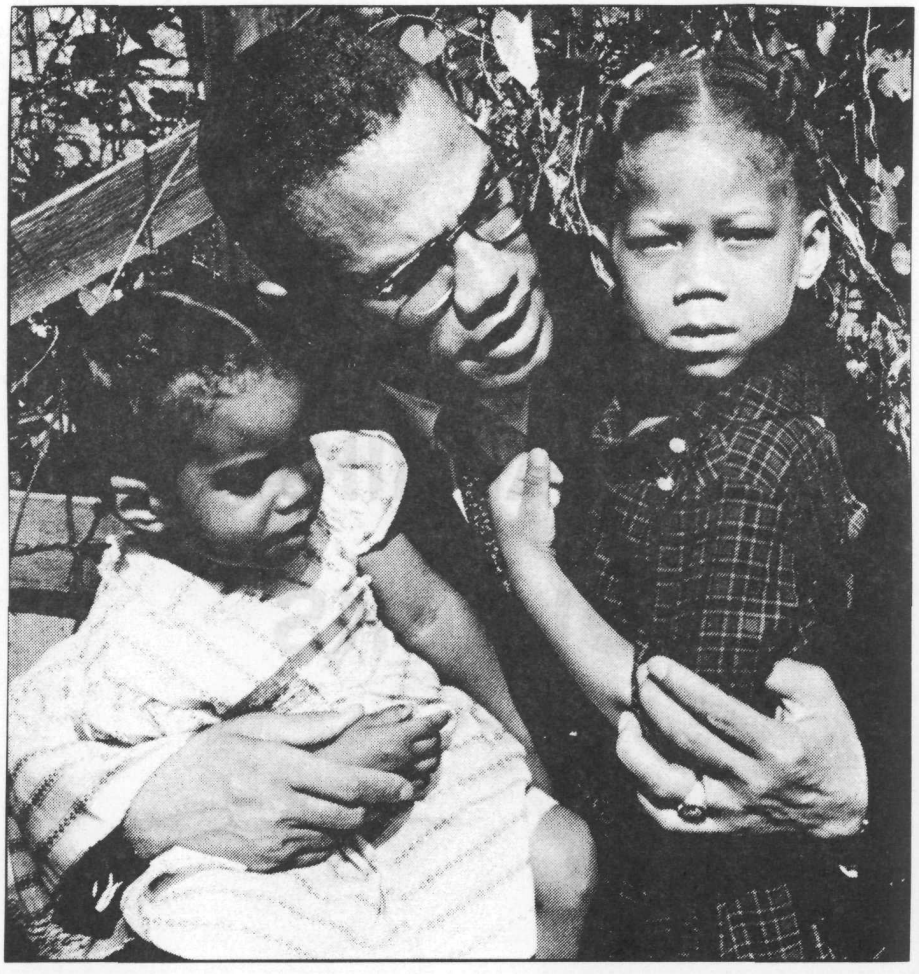
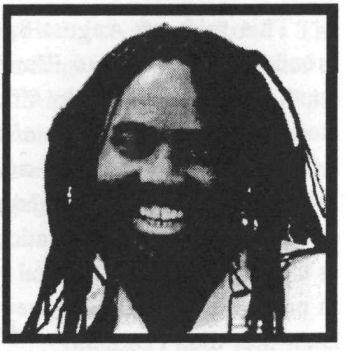
New Afrikans/ Blacks



Malcolm X with two of his daughters, 1964.



MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
MOVE Political Prisoner

My name is Mumia Abu-Jamal. My background is in Radical/Revolutionary Media, Print, and Broadcast.

As a young activist in the Black Panther Party, I was taught graphic arts, newspaper layout, and related propaganda skills by California Minister of Culture, Emery Douglas, his wife, BPP Editor Judy Douglas, and Deputy Culture Minister Brad Brewer, in the East Coast Information Ministry headquarters in the Bronx.

Later, I expanded into a wide range of radio outlets for news and commentary, having done freelance for the National Black Network, Mutual Black Network, and a host of regional radio stations, always with an anti-authoritarian, radical cast. My work has been aired on National Public Radio, and primarily Black-oriented stations nationally.

Such a stance in reportage hasn't always found favor among station ownership, so, with the emergence of the MOVE Organization in Philadelphia, and my penchant for provocative pieces which challenged the status quo (and MOVE posed the most provocative challenge to Philadelphia's status quo since the 1700s), I quickly became stigmatized as a threat to said status quo, and a target among city cops, but principally because of the ongoing, and utterly critical persecution of MOVE members and supporters.

While "colleagues" nicknamed me "Mumia Africa," in an attempt to disparage, the actual Africas were caught in a wicked web of a state set-up that culminated in the infamous pre-dawn war waged against MOVE, which resulted in nine MOVE men and women being framed for the shooting death of a cop and sentenced to a century each!

The trial judge, in fact, told a regionally broadcast radio audience that he had "no idea" who shot the cop, but . . . "they were tried as a family, I sentenced them as a family."

This raid, on August 8, 1978, was broadcast globally and illuminated the depth of corruption that city officials would stoop to, to still the voice of the valiant Africas; nine men and women (the women, incidentally, not even charged with weapons offenses, were given identical sentences as the men) sentenced to a total of 900 years in prison, for a crime that they (the state) *knew* they didn't commit!

The trial judge, in fact, told a regionally broadcast radio audience that he had "no idea" who shot the cop, but . . . "they were tried as a family, I sentenced them as a family" (Judge Edwin S. Talmed, Common Pleas Court Judge, speaking on the *Frank Ford Show*, WWDB-FM (96.5) radio, August 1978) the day following the "trial."

Hence, MOVE's "crime"—being members of the MOVE Organization, and refusing to renounce the naturalist, anti-establishment teachings of MOVE Founder *John Africa*. This is not rhetoric, or supposition. It is interesting to note that twelve people were arrested in the MOVE house/headquarters on the day of the raid. Three were released prior to trial, after renouncing MOVE. One reaffiliated and was given a 10-year sentence for conspiracy.

As a reporter for a well-known public radio station I covered this frame-up of MOVE, and instead of parroting the State prosecutor's rantings, I simply did what any so-called "objective" reporter was trained to do, i.e., I got both sides — the system's, *and* MOVE's.

This activity, undertaken in the spirit of fundamental fairness, and a sense of kinship with fellow radicals, marked me for legal extinction shortly thereafter. Another pre-dawn attack, on men wearing dreadlocks, resulted in my being shot and beaten, and a cop shot, on a central Philadelphia street, in December 1981.

Despite my efforts to defend myself, to select a jury of "peers," to give opening and closing arguments, and cross-examine, I spent most of the "trial" out of the courtroom. On July 3, 1982, a jury, in a rush so as not to spoil their 4th of July weekend, sentenced me to death.

In December 1996, an unprecedented International Peoples Tribunal sat in plenary session in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and after a day-long public hearing, found the prosecution, conviction, sentencingt and incarceration of Jamal to be violative of international law.

In arguing for the death sentence, the state prosecutor drew on published reports, over a decade old, detailing my Black Panther background. Though I was certainly not ashamed of it, its impact on a

virtually all-white jury, middle class and over middle-aged, was a tactic designed to demand death.

1998 Updated: In Spring 1995 Addison-Wesley published Jamal's *Live From Death Row*, which became a best-seller. *Death Blossoms* (Plough Publ., Farmington, PA) was released a year later to rave reviews for its spiritual perspective. In December 1996, an unprecedented International Peoples Tribunal sat in plenary session in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and after a day-long public hearing, found the prosecution, conviction, sentencing and incarceration of Jamal to be violative of international law. Twenty-three prestigious citizen-judges, drawn from France, Haiti, South Africa, Egypt, Spain, Germany and the U.S. condemned the state's prosecution as a fundamental violation of human rights and demanded Jamal's immediate release from Pennsylvania's Death Row. The Tribunal's findings have been forwarded to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations.

Total sentence: Death + 2-1/2 to 5 years
Current legal status: direct appeal.

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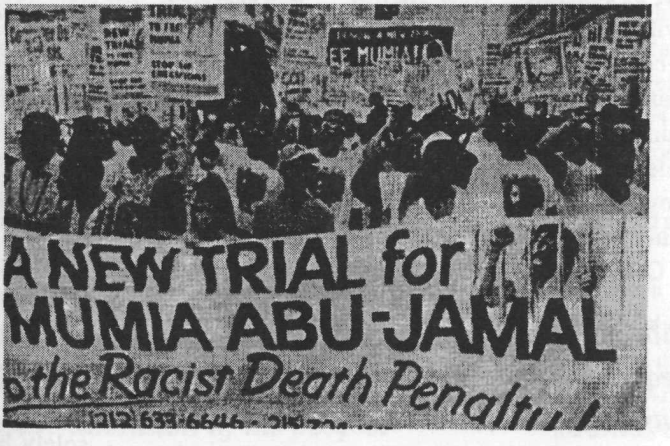

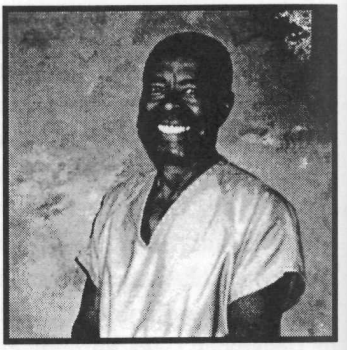

Sundiata Acoli, a New Afrikan political prisoner of war, mathematician, and computer analyst, was born January 14, 1937, in Decatur, Texas, and raised in Vernon, Texas. He graduated from Prairie View A & M College of Texas in 1956 with a B.S. in mathematics and for the next 13 years worked for various computer-oriented firms, mostly in the New York area.

SUNDIATA ACOLI

New Afrikan Prisoner of War

During the summer of 1964 he did voter registration work in Mississippi. In 1968 he joined the Harlem Black Panther Party and did community work around issues of schools, housing, jobs, child care, drugs, and police brutality.

In 1969 he and 13 others were arrested in the Panther 21 conspiracy case. He was held in jail without bail and on trial for two years before being acquitted, along with all other defendants, by a jury deliberating less than two hours.

Upon release, FBI intimidation of potential employers shut off all employment possibilities in the computer profession and stepped-up COINTELPRO harassment, surveillance, and provocations soon drove him underground.

In May 1973, while driving the New Jersey Turnpike, he and his comrades were ambushed by N.J. state troopers. One companion, Zayd Shakur, was killed, another companion, Assata Shakur, was wounded and captured. One state trooper was killed and another wounded, and Sundiata was captured days later.

After a highly sensationalized and prejudicial trial he was convicted of the death of the state trooper and was sentenced to Trenton State Prison (TSP) for life plus 30 years consecutive.

Upon entering TSP he was subsequently confined to a new and specially created Management Control Unit (MCU) solely because of his

In September 1979, the International Jurist interviewed Sundiata and subsequently declared him a political prisoner.

political background. He remained in MCU almost five years in a stripped cell smaller than the SPCA's space requirement for a German shepherd dog. He was let out of the cell only ten minutes a day for showers and two hours twice a week for recreation and was subjected to constant harassment and several attacks by guards. During one period he was not let out of the cell for six continuous months.

In September 1979, the *International Jurist* interviewed Sundiata and subsequently declared him a political prisoner. A few days later prison officials secretly transferred him during the middle of the night to the federal prison system and put him enroute to the infamous federal concentration camp at Marion, Illinois, although he had no federal charges or sentences. An entrance physical exam by federal medical personnel disclosed that he had been heavily exposed to tuberculosis while at Trenton State Prison.

Marion is one of the highest security prisons in the U.S., also one of the harshest, and there Sundiata was locked down 23 hours a day in a stripped cell containing only a stone bed, toilet, wash bowl, and a few personal items. Brutal conditions and violence are epidemic at Marion where murders and assaults by guards and prisoners alike are common occurrences. During one turbulent period beginning in October 1983, Sundiata and all prisoners were confined to their cell blocks 24 hours a day for nine continuous months as wolf packs of guards roamed about the complex beating prisoners at random.

Sundiata spent eight years at Marion, longer than almost any other prisoner. In July 1987 he was transferred to the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas.

In the fall of 1992, Sundiata became eligible for parole. He was not permitted to attend his own parole hearing and was only allowed to participate via telephone from USP Leavenworth. Despite an excellent prison work, academic and disciplinary record, despite numerous job offers in the computer profession, and despite thousands of letters on his behalf, Sundiata was denied parole. Instead, at the conclusion of a 20 minute telephone hearing, he was given a 20-year hit, the longest hit in New Jersey history, which dictates that he must do at least 12 more years before coming up for parole again.

The Parole Board's stated reason for the 20-year hit was Sundiata's membership in the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army prior to his arrest, the receipt of hundreds of "Free

The real reason for the 20-year hit is to attempt to force Sundiata to renounce his politcal beliefs and to proclaim to the world that he was wrong to struggle for the liberation of his people.

Sundiata" form letters that characterized him as a New Afrikan Prisoner of War, and the feeling that the punitive aspects of his sentence had not been satisfied and that rehabilitation was not sufficiently achieved. The real reason for the 20-year hit is to attempt to force Sundiata to renounce his political beliefs and to proclaim to the world that he was wrong to struggle for the liberation of his people. In April 1994, Sundiata was transferred to USP Allenwood in White Deer, Pennsylvania where he is currently confined.

Date of Entry into Prison: May 1973
Sentence: Life plus 30 years.
Time Served to Date: 25 years

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Eleven of theNew York Panther 21. Seated, left to right: Kinshasa, Sundiata Acoli, Joan Bird, Michael "Cetewayo" Tabor, Ali Bey Hassan, Robert Collier and Lumumba Shakur. Standing, left to right, Katarra, Baba Odinga, Shaba-Um and Curtis Powell.

Before bombing the home of MOVE members in the city of Philiadephia, Police announced:

Attention MOVE ! This is AMERICA!

I was born in Philadelphia, PA, in 1959 and was raised in West Philly. I have three sisters and a brother. We lived in various small redevelopment houses and/or projects.

My mother and father were divorced and I remember him briefly when I was about three or four. We settled down the bottom or "black bottom" on 39th and Reno Street.

CHARLES SIMS AFRICA

MOVE Political Prisoner

My grandfather (who also lived with us) died in 1972. At that time I thought he was the smartest person I had talked with. He talked about history and the second World War a lot. He told me about current events and was particularly fond of Angela Davis. I was always in search of knowledge and I wanted to be a part of something. I was never close to anyone in my family. Being the oldest male of the house, I was the "man of the house." I used to "take orders" at the supermarket on Lancaster Ave to try to make money when I was young and also sold papers. Later on I got into stealing and robbing.

I remember seeing the Black Panther Party marching past our house and all through the neighborhood. Young dudes with rifles and shotguns flipping over police cars was a sight that blew my mind. I had never saw anything like it. I was too young to understand what was all going on throughout the country and that was the first time I had saw the BPP. We tried to march with them but our mothers kept us on the block.

I met MOVE in 1973. It was a cold winter night. Me and a few of my gang stepped in my mother's house and in the middle of the floor sat numerous men and women with long un-combed hair. The things that I heard stayed with me for the rest of my life. I had never heard anything like it. They talked about the court system, educational system, religion, news commentators, they spoke on science, prayer and time. The information they gave us was powerful and had a gripping force on me and my friends and really everybody with its clarity. As I listened I soon understood

and witnessed this to be a fact! No one had ever explained the school system and its purpose before I met MOVE. There were things being told to me that I knew were true instinctly but I could never put them into words myself. I was always told all my life to go to school, obey the laws, etc., but never what was the purpose, whose education I was learning or why damn near every cop I saw in my neighborhood was white and hostile to us blacks. My introduction to JOHN AFRICA'S Guidelines opened my mind up to actually use it and question the norm, the constraints of every day life, the lies, the hidden truths in a world of constant dishonesty.

MOVE were the most united, together people I had ever met and I felt something coming over me and I knew right from the start that I would be a part of MOVE.

There were more rap sessions or study sessions to come as I met more MOVE people and was being taught and read more of JOHN AFRICA'S teachings. I went to be around MOVE in 1974 and would work at the car wash with MOVE and eat fresh fruit and vegetables that MOVE kept near its front porch. We all worked hard all day washing cars that we did for donations. It was always a real good family atmosphere whenever we did anything. We did everything as a family. MOVE's belief is activity, everything on Earth has got to move. We ran our dogs for exercise; we also ran for 1 hour, then 2 hours, everyday in rain, sleet or snow as a family around the blocks of the neighborhood and we were in fantastic shape. I had never been in such good condition. We boxed in our exercise room, did pull-ups, push-ups, and ran all day in the park. The more I stayed, the stronger I got. I had never met anyone like our Coordinator, JOHN AFRICA. The total trust and assurance being in that presence. It's something that you just had to experience to fully comprehend.

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I was born Debbie Sims in Philadelphia, PA, raised with two sisters and two brothers. My mother raised us basically alone in a ghetto neighborhood.

I was raised by my mother until about the age of 16 when I got a job at an insurance company. I stayed in school until I graduated from Overbrook High in 1974, and although I was still at home I was pretty much on my own.

DEBBIE SIMS AFRICA

MOVE Political Prisoner

I met members of the MOVE Organization one night after my mother called them to settle a bad fight that took place between us and another family in front of my house.

By the time I was 18 I was a MOVE member and by that time MOVE was well into confrontations with cops due to unjust arrests, beatings and persecution by cops and the city of Philadelphia. By May 1977 MOVE had had enough and taken a stand against Philadelphia and then Mayor Frank Rizzo.

I thought we were gonna die. It was only a miracle that we didn't die, with the way cops were shooting at us (some point blank in our faces from close range), the way the firemen had water jetting in the basement windows and the way they gassed us. (We found out later that when water and tear gas or smoke are mixed together it is a deadly gas.)

It was about 5 AM on the morning of August 8, 1978 when my husband and me were woke up by sounds of unfamiliar voices and loud noises outside our house in Powelton Village.

My husband got up to see what was going on while I anxiously waited with our baby girl in my arms.

My husband came back very quickly and told me that cops were surrounding the house: I got up in a hurry, went downstairs where everybody was gathering children and

dogs and going down to the basement, where it would be safe. We huddled together. We didn't know how they were gonna do it but we knew their plans were to kill all of us.

Soon after everybody was in the basement, the windows were punched out and cops were yelling over a loud speaker for us to come out of our house. Shoot! Wasn't nobody about to come out that house with all them cops surrounding our house with all them guns. We didn't know what they wanted, didn't trust them so nobody went out. Before we knew it water was coming through the hole where the window used to be, the wave of water used to put out fires was now being sprayed in on us which took up the entire length and width of the window hole, throwing two-by-four oak beams across the room, slamming big dogs up against the walls, and literally tearing the house apart from the inside; a second wave of water came through another would-be window hole and we were caught in a crossfire of water. All I could do was scream I was so scared. Dogs and beams were flying everywhere. I held tight to my baby and other children that were around me and stayed low while the men hovered around us to protect us. When the cops started shooting I closed my eyes and just held tight to my baby and protectively shielded her the best that I could from the flying debris and planks. Holding her tight made me feel I could protect her from flying bullets. It was the most frightening situation I've ever been in.

At one point I couldn't even see the baby's face because of the smoke and tear gas thrown in the basement by cops that was also choking me all the while the water level was rising. I thought we were gonna die. It was only a miracle that we didn't die, with the way cops were shooting at us (some point blank in our faces from close range), the way the firemen had water jetting in the basement windows and the way they gassed us. (We found out later that when water and tear gas or smoke are mixed together it is a deadly gas.)

The cops were crazy that day and all I can say is LONG LIVE JOHN AFRICA! that we didn't die because it wasn't no restraint of those cops that saved us. The attack was over in a short time but it seemed like hours when we came out the house. We were met by hundreds of armed cops. All 5 MOVE men, Mike, Phil, Delbert, Chuck and Eddie were beaten bad several times by the cops but only Delbert's beating was caught on cameras.

...the only witnesses that testified to the men having weapons were cops; all the cops said about the women was that we were holding babies and we were convicted because we were with our husbands in our house.

Can't Jail the Spirit

I had turned 22 in August. I was 8 months pregnant when I had my baby snatched from my arms by cops in front of my house on August 8, 1978. I couldn't believe we were being arrested and charged with murder because we hadn't done nothing wrong. On September 15, 1978 I had my son in my prison cell naturally without the aid of doctors, nurses or prison staff; that is the way I wanted it.

Giving him up hurt like nothing I've ever felt before, to have my second baby snatched from me for no reason other than my belief in the teaching of JOHN AFRICA. I am a member of MOVE and this system wants to get rid of MOVE any way it can. Michael was four days old when he was taken from me.

There were 7 women total arrested and 5 men. Only 4 MOVE women and 5 MOVE men ended convicted and sentenced to a total of 100 years each. Two women were given separate trials and are on the street. The third woman was released only 2 weeks after we were all arrested; simply because the other women were not MOVE members.

None of the MOVE 9 have weapons charges and the only witnesses that testified to the men having weapons were cops; all the cops said about the women was that we were holding babies and we were convicted because we were with our husbands in our house. This is the issue that we have spent 20 years in prison for, 20 years of our children's lives, for our family's lives, for being committed to our religious belief. That which this country says you have the right to.

The PA parole board refused to let MOVE members out of prison because they refused to leave MOVE, for years.

When Judge Malmed sentenced the MOVE 9 he stated that he was sentencing all of us to the same time because we are a family. Imagine that being given 30-100 years in prison because we were a family and are loyal to our husbands.

My son Michael is almost 20, I am almost 42, and my daughter is almost 22 and I have 2 grandchildren.

Two of my MOVE sisters who are in prison with me, Janine and Janet, both had young children at home on Osage Ave. when we were sent to prison, and their children were murdered May 13, 1985 by cops for the same reason we were attacked August 8, 1978.

I am a political prisoner serving 30-100 years and I have been in prison 20 years.

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DELBERT AFRICA
MOVE Political Prisoner

Delbert Africa is one of the MOVE 9. He is 53 years old and has been in MOVE almost since the beginning—25 to 26 years.

Before MOVE I was a confused individual, even though I had thought I knew what revolution was, based on the theoretical outlook of Marxist-Leninist social democracy. I can still say, because I didn't know how to clean up the system's garbage in me, I was a thrown off person.

I had originally joined the Panthers not for any uplifting of people's rights or freedom. I joined it on an ego trip. It went along with what I was thinking anyway. I liked armourments, regime, discipline, power, shovinism, and all that. It was convenient. The only reason I joined the Panthers was because of a woman that I met at a party, the Minister of Health. I was hitting on her and she said straight up "I'm tired of all y'all handkerchief head niggers coming up with this lame stuff," and that blew my mind. I said, "What!" and she said "yeah all y'all handkerchief heads ain't got nothing going . . . blah, blah, blah." So then I started hitting on her asking "OK, where you coming from?" She ran down the whole party line for me and that's how I got interested in the Panthers.

We've often been said in MOVE, that the basis for the revolution of ours is the women and it's been born true. In MOVE, all the women that have been attracted to MOVE have more staying power in the long run than men, not that men aren't on the level. I'm saying that women just basically do not like to drift away from MOVE. I always say that our sisters and our wives in MOVE definitely are stabilizers. Whenever I was in trouble they were always there. I just love 'em, just the joy of working with them over these years. I thank JOHN AFRICA for they influence all the time!

I first encountered JOHN AFRICA'S teachings in Philadelphia while I was on the run. I was in the Black Panthers. In 1969, the leadership hierarchy of the Chicago chapter all had false warrants put forth, which I was one of them. Myself and 2

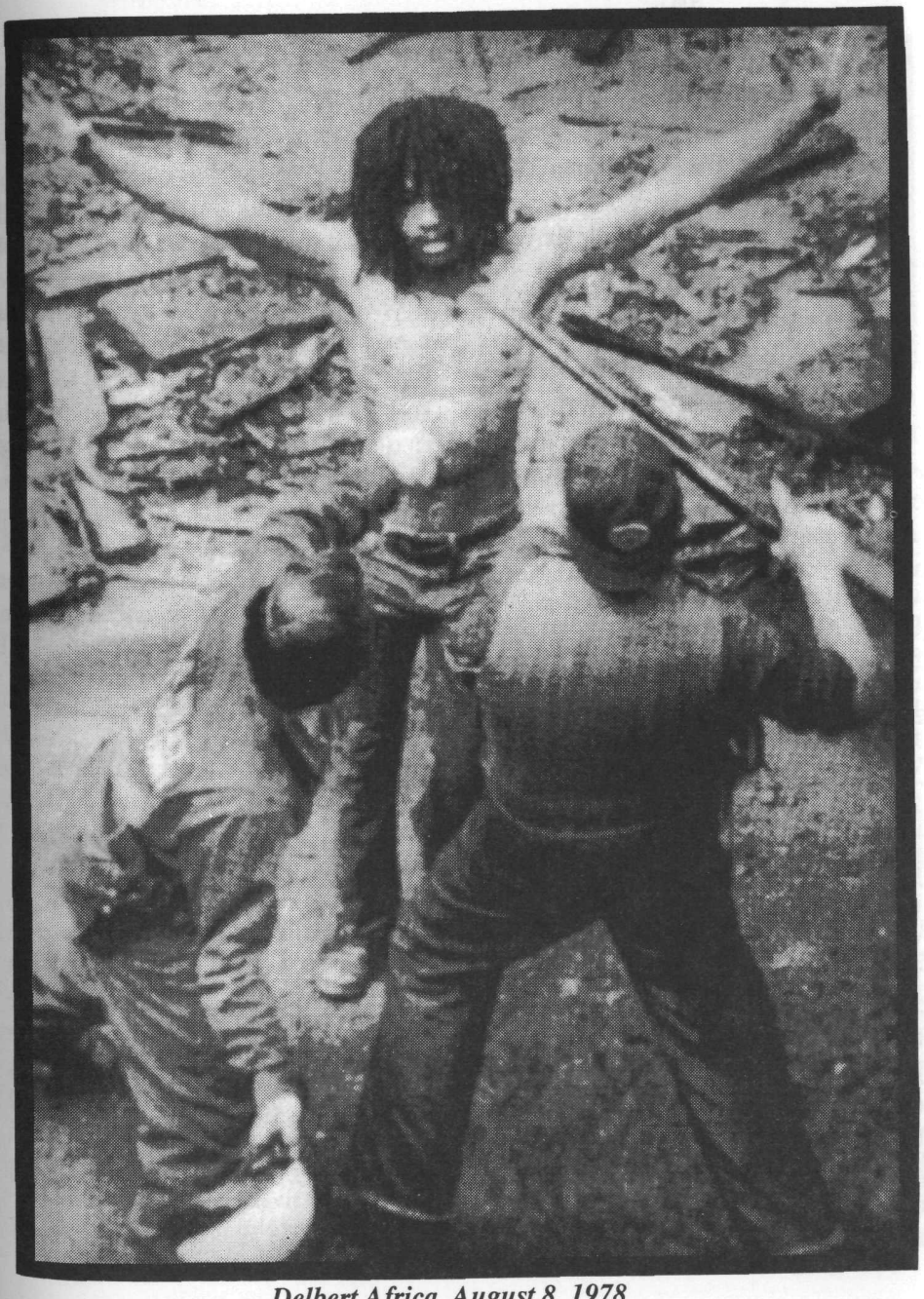
other members fled to Canada. We were doing bad, we met another member of the Party while we were up there and we were doing very bad and could not get any financial support from the party as a result. We did stick ups to take care of ourselves. That was going bad.

I ran again into MOVE people and I stayed from that time on because I was intrigued with what I was hearing, it was uplifting. I was even given some information because I still had braces on my leg. I had a back brace and a nerve injury in my leg that prevented me from moving it and I had been told by the doctors that I wouldn't be able to run again, that I would walk with difficulty and so forth. Some information I had gotten from MOVE Law just put me on my feet, was cooling me out and everything. I have been here ever since. That is an oversimplification, but that's just the fact of what happened. Everything I was getting from MOVE was generating me, making me stronger and exposing all the lies I've lived under.

In terms of the beatings from the 1978 confrontation which was captured on video, I recovered right after they stopped, I was getting better. It's hard to describe it, that when they originally started beating me from the first cop in front of me hitting me with that helmet. The other fool put the butt stroke with the shotgun on me. From that time, MOMMA had just put me in a state of mind where I could feel the pressure from all the blows, the kicks and all that, but they wasn't really hurting me. I can remember after they beat me, they drug me across the street to where police commissioner O'Neil, the Chief Inspector, and other high rankin cops was at, and they was beating me over there. That's where I remember Phil and I can remember, and Phil remembers, me telling him, "It's gonna be alright." Some cop was about to put his foot on Phil's neck and I yelled at them to stop and I told Phil "We're gonna be alright," and Phil said "That's right. On the MOVE! Long live JOHN AFRICA! Phil was on the ground and another cop was aboaut to kick him and O'Neil, the police commissioner, said "Don't do that here because the cameras can see us." So then they separated me and put me in a wagon, but I never knew how bad I was hurt.

That night, after separating me from the rest of MOVE members, they took me to Holmesburg prison, a nurse thought to give me an apple to eat. I said, "thank you" and I went to bite down on the apple and my whole face just froze. It wouldn't work. I literally had

The basis for the revolution of ours is the women and it's been born true. In MOVE, all the women that have been attracted to MOVE have more staying power in the long run than men.



Delbert Africa August 8, 1978

to pull the apple out and that's when I found out my jaw was broken, my eye socket was fractured and all of that. I wasn't feelin hurt. In fact, I was feeling just angry at the thought of being captured.

I was held in the "hole" for six years. I originally went in January of 1984. I've only been here at Dallas, I got here in August 1981. In December of 1989 I was transferred out of here because they had riots at Camp Hill prison, which I wasn't even a part of, but the state prison saw it as an opportunity to get rid of so-called trouble makers. So they transfered me to the Federal system. We were under 23 hour lock up there, 24 hours lock up on weekends where they wouldn't even let us out for yard. I stayed down there until May of that year. Then they transfered me to another prison. After looking through my records, they told me we don't want any trouble with you, but if you give us any trouble we'll lock you under. I said "OK, I ain't got no problem with that." They even wanted to give me one of the prison jobs of printing in the print shop. They were mystified when I turned them down because they were starting off prison wages good, it was $86 a month. I said, "Now, I don't want that." They said "Wait a minute. This is just starting off, you can MOVE right on up." I said, "Look, I've been in the hole for 6 years. I want some air! I don't want no career in the prison." So they assigned me to the yard detail. And that was it, I loved that. I stayed in there a year and then I got out, they put me in population and I've been here ever since.

I would like to put one thing out there about the need for everybody to join this revolution. We always speak of JOHN AFRICA'S revolution, we speak of that only in terms of people knowing that this is the impetus for give US the direction, the drive to carry on this, but the main thing we always stress is THIS IS FOR EVERYBODY! Just as everybody's heart has to revolute, beat, and everybody's lungs has to revolute the old air out, the new air in, so it is that everybody has to revolute against this system, which is the cause of all the heart attacks, all the lung disease, all the hemorrages, all the problems of life is caused by this system. So what we're doing is necessary for everybody to do on whatever level they can do it on. That's what I want to put out to everybody.

LONG LIVE JOHN AFRICA!

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EDWARD GOODMAN AFRICA

MOVE Political Prisoner

On the MOVE! My name is Edward (Goodman) Africa. I'm forty-six years old. I was born in Philadelphia and raised in a Christian home by both parents. I'm one of six children. I grew up in the streets of Philadelphia, began drinking at the young age of fourteen and went on to drugs (marijuana, speed, pills, heroin, etc.) by the age of fifteen. I went to jail for the first time in 1963 at the age of sixteen for "receiving stolen goods." I got out of jail in 1967 but went back every summer after that. I started looking for something Black as I started to believe that all whites were evil. I supported the Black Panthers, the B.L.A. and finally joined the group known as the "Black Muslims."

I was still involved in street life: stealing, drugs, parties, women, etc. Most of my arrests were between 1967-1973 (when I joined MOVE) and were based on getting stopped by cops for nothing and refusing to be searached while being slammed against a car. When I complained, I got roughed up and when I resisted I'd get beat more. Of course I'd end up getting charged with assault and resisting arrest.

As I learned more about this particular Muslim group, I thought I had answers but I still felt unsatisfied and the racism in me grew. About this time, one of my brothers and my cousin came to visit me in jail. They began telling me of the MOVE Organization, but I refused to listen because MOVE had white members.

I went back and forth with them until finally I had no choice but to admit that what they said is right, I couldn't deny their understanding. I began to work with MOVE because what they were giving me was more complete than anything I had ever known. I am now a committed MOVE member, a disciple of JOHN AFRICA, Long Live JOHN AFRICA!

My last arrest was on August 8, 1978, I'm one of the MOVE 9. We were each wrongfully convicted of murder, assault and conspiracy by the late Judge Edwin S.

Malmed and each sentenced to 30-100 years in prison. As of August 8, 1997 the nine of us have served 19 years of that outrageous sentence, despite our innocence and despite our appeals. I have four grown children that I left as babies in 1978. I have several granchildren that I have never been with except briefly on a prison visit. This aplies to other members of the MOVE 9 as well. In closing I want to say that I had no intentions of becoming a revolutionary, this system encouraged me, pushed me to become a revolutionary, JOHN AFRICA provided the direction.

On the MOVE

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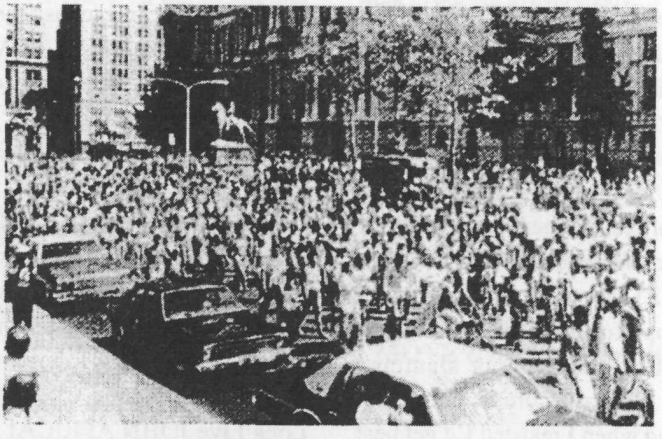
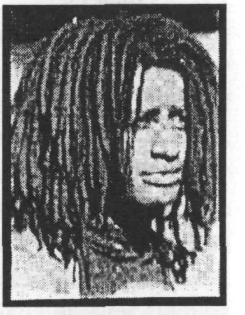


Demonstration against Philadelphia Mayor Rizzo's starvation blockade, April 4, 1978



JANET AFRICA
MOVE Political Prisoner

My name is Janet Africa, I have been in prison along with my MOVE sisters and brothers since August 8, 1978 for a crime we didn't commit. The MOVE 9 was framed for the death of a cop who was shot and killed by his own fellow cop. All nine of us were sentenced to 30 to 100 years. (August 8, 1998 will be 20 years that we have been unjustly imprisoned.) The Judge stipulated that we could not be eligible for parole until we've done at least 30 years. That will be 2008.

I want to take this opportunity to pass on this information from JOHN AFRICA to encourage people to be strong and keep up their guard against this system.

FROM THE TEACHING OF
JOHN AFRICA

Revolution is not a word but an application, it is not war but peace, it does not weaken it strengthens, revolution does not cause separation, it generates togetherness ...revolution is an activity, a generating force that continues generating, continues activating, continues togetherness, solidarity will never be realized so long as geography is imperative, solidarity is unity, without unity you can't have revolution... revolution is organization just as solidarity is togetherness...the word people should be a symbol of identity which should unite people and dispel war but to call everybody a person and go to war against people is to say that people are compelled to conflict making peace hopeless and everything people are striving to make, to have, to be... if we expect to accomplish the defeat of oppression, we are going to have to understand the power of assertion, a single mind is an assertive

... if we expect to accomplish the defeat of oppression, we are going to have to understand the power of assertion, a single mind is an assertive mind, when we think as one we are as no other ...

mind, when we think as one we are as no other, when we think as one another we're defeated because one is one and another is something other than one, this ain't no word game, revolution is not a game no more than words are innocent... solidarity ain't a word, solidarity is a principle that exists despite words, and will exist when words have ceased...revolution ain't a principle that is applied when the oppressor is oppressing, revolution is the principle of freedom even when the oppressor does not exist, revolution simply means to revolute, activate, generate, move, so long as you are moving you are free but when you are not moving you are in bondage, a revolutionary is very simply the person that understands revolution, the person that understands to move is to be fit, to be fit is to be strong, to be strong is to demonstrate strong committment to the principle of strength, the principle of fitness, the principle of revolution, the principle of freedom...when oppression oppresses people to revolt, the way of true revolution is to press on with examples of revolution so that when a people rebel they will not be discouraged by seeing no way out except to go back to the very adversary they're rebelling against... a revolutionary must then be willing to apply this principle so that people can be set to one aim, the aim of revolution for it is this single aim that will thrust you onward when all else fails, when people are divided committment is severed and the aim is divided, it is necessary to understand this when involving ourselves in revolution, many aims drawing from one energy source defeats this source by exhausting it's energy, one aim is all powerful when all energy is concentrated in one...the total aim is as raw power, for the total aim is total energy, totality directed one way and when this is understood in conjunction with the oppressed thee restrained, it is understood that as total direction the oppressed thee restrained have total power that must be directed in the way of revolution with understanding that the restrained and oppressed is like a dammed up wild river that is only to be turned loose and directed, a strategic revolutionary is the pivotal point in a restrained society that pivots the restrained in the way of revolution by informing the restrained of the power of freedom through examples of freedom against examples of slavery...a single bullet from a gun will knock you down but spread the powder from that bullet to five other bullets and the single bullet has lost its punch for you no longer have one strong bullet you have five weak

...Don't think that freedom is determined by a building called a prison, freedom is very simply the absence of this system, the disposal of politics, the total elimination of the confinement of enslavement.

bullets and when called on to do the work necessary in revolution the gun will fail you because the power of the bullet have been split five ways and will fall short of its target, this is the principle of revolution, oppressed people is like a single bullet and when aimed correctly will knock down thee oppressor without fail...the revolution MOVE speak of ain't no myth or conversation piece, there is a wave wellin up that been wellin up for years that is soon to be released and will support only those who can swim, when the tide seem low it ain't safe to fall asleep and assume the wave ain't coming in, the smart thing to do is maintain awareness by keeping your mind on the problem causing system so when the revolutionary wave deal the final blow you are carried smoothly as a revolutionary and not drowned as the unaware, the responsibility of MOVE is to make everybody aware of JOHN AFRICA'S Revolution, for this problem system must be washed away swiftly, uncompromisingly in order for true freedom to be felt, don't think that freedom is determined by a building called a prison, freedom is very simply the absence of this system, the disposal of politics, the total elimination of the confinement of enslavement. When you look to this sytem of prison to be released from this system of prison you ain't being released you are being recycled like scrap metal in a junk yard to be processed again and again til you are retired to the grave yard.

LONG LIVE
JOHN AFRICA'S WISDOM!

Consuewella and Janet Africa carry children out of the flooded basement.

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JANINE AFRICA
MOVE Political Prisoner

This is Janine Africa, one of the MOVE 9 unjustly sentenced to 30-100 years in prison for third degree murder. Nine people falsly convicted of shooting one cop, who was shot one time, with one gun, the cop was standing up, facing MOVE's house, we were all in the basement below ground level. The first report made by Police Commissioner O'Neill was that the cop was shot in the back of the neck and that the bullet travelled downward making it impossible for MOVE to have shot him. Of course the reports have been changed since then to fit the cops story and to convict MOVE people. The MOVE 9 is innocent, we're in prison because we are committed to exposing and confronting the injustice and persecution of all life by this corrupt system, we're in prison for being committed to our belief, JOHN AFRICA'S teaching, for being a strong, loyal family. In Judge Malmed's own words "they have repeatedly stated they are a family so I am obliging them by sentencing them as a family." We've been in prison 19 years now for a crime we didn't commit, but we are all still strongly committed to our belief in revolution. We will never leave MOVE, even if it means spending the rest of our lives in prison! The power of truth is final, long live JOHN AFRICA'S revolution.

We were arrested August 8, 1978, our minimum is 2008.

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MERLE AUSTIN AFRICA

MOVE Political Prisoner

ONA MOVE: My name is Merle Africa, Disciple of JOHN AFRICA and Minister of Administrative Coordination. I am a 48 year old woman of color living in the U.S. I've been a member of the MOVE Organization since 1973 and these 25 years have been the most satisfying and happiest I have ever experienced despite the 20 years unjustly spent in prison and vicious brutal murder my family experienced at the hands of the system, May 13, 1985.

Before joining MOVE, I had relatively the same type of existence as everybody else in the system; I went to schools in Philadelphia, graduated, got a secretarial job at Temple University, but I had plenty of problems with no hope of finding solutions for them. My only so called relief, outlet to problems was intoxication. I was an alcoholic from the age of 8 and a habiatual drug addict since the age of 15. My father was a heavy drinker and along with other relatives, as a young child they would let me drink from their glasses, "taking a sip" until I had acquired a taste for liquor and as the years passed I drank at home and at friend's homes until I turned into a drunken alcoholic. Children are supposed to be happy, problem-free but I was far from happy. I was fat and mentally unstable. I have a younger sister (who isn't in MOVE) who I fought constantly, along with my parents because I thought they preferred her to me, I thought they didn't love me, I didn't trust them and I felt I couldn't get any relief by talking to them. By the time I entered my teens, I was suffering from severe bouts of depression, hallucination and paranoia. I was suicidal, went on eating binges and was bulemic. I also suffered from violent outbursts of temper where I'd try to hurt my mom and sister and

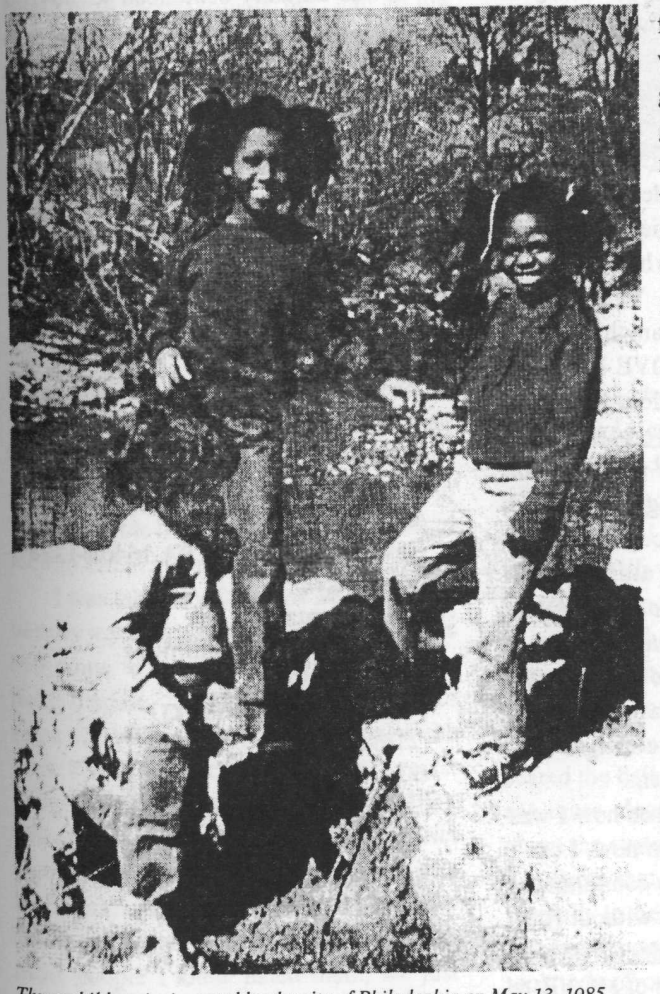
I didn't get any relief from talking to psychiatrists and group therapy sessions my mother took me to.

tried to hurt myself by banging my head on the floor until it bled. I realize now the problems I had was because I was so unhappy, dissatisfied, frustrated and mentally demolished. I needed love, understanding and attention which I wasn't getting at home, only vicious, abusive beatings from my father to make me tow the line. I didn't get any relief from talking to psychiatrists and group therapy sessions my mother took me to. I was suicidal because I felt I had no reason to live and when I asked my psychiatrists to explain my purpose in Life, they had no answer, they just told my mom I was too violent, too disturbed to live at home, I was dangerous. They didn't have any solution for me so they kept after her to institutionalize me, which she refused to do. The turning point in my life came when I met MOVE people and started hearing the powerful teachings of JOHN AFRICA.

I felt drawn to the true love, sensitivity and family unity I saw in the MOVE people I met and eventually, from talking to MOVE I started going to study sessions to hear the teaching of JOHN AFRICA, MOVE LAW. The information I heard is the most powerful, analytical, truthful writing I have ever heard about this sytem. I was real impressed with the way JOHN AFRICA took the time, had the patience to talk to a mother about her cranky unruly child, or listen to JOHN AFRICA speak at meetings giving a couple solution to a marital problem they were having. Whenever any of us was unhappy or troubled The Coordinator always had the patience, the time to talk to us, give us real solutions to our problems, something no doctor, psychiatrist, minister or parent has ever done for anybody before. I kept going to more and more study sessions and other MOVE activities cause I felt drawn to MOVE LAW because it is the truth and unlike other organizations I've heard of and read about, I realize JOHN AFRICA's teaching ain't meaningless rhetoric as the newsmedia claimed, but there's uncompromising power in MOVE LAW and its shown in the family unity, love and sensitivity I've experienced and displayed since being in MOVE. I have personally witnessed miracles within myself and other MOVE people. In the 1960's I had two back room abortions performed on me. After the second abortion, I almost died from loss of blood. After that I was in constant pain and hospitalized for cysts and boils on my tubes and vaginal area. The doctors I went to couldn't find a cause for the medical problems I was having. When I got in MOVE, the trouble continued, JOHN AFRICA told me what was wrong. He didn't physically examine me or run no test. He told me I had

The turning point in my life came when I met MOVE people and started hearing the powerful teachings of JOHN AFRICA.

a tumor in my stomach and it was because of the abortions I had had and I hadn't told Him about the abortions. The Coordinator told me what to do, how to eat and said in time I would get better. I was in pain, bedridden for months at a time and bleeding, at no time did The Coordinator force me to do nothing I didn't want to do, He didn't force me to stay in bed; in fact, it was The Coordinator who told me if I wanted to go to the hospital He would get one of the men to take me and I told Him I didn't want to go, that I trusted him and knew from all the examples I'd seen of MOVE people getting better after being sick, I knew He was the only one who could help me. I put my faith in my Belief, in JOHN AFRICA to make me better and He did cause the tumor came out on its own without me ever going back to the hospital for an operation and I've never had any more menstrual or stomach problems again. LONG LIVE JOHN AFRICA FOREVER! If it hadn't been for the healing power of JOHN AFRICA, I would be dead, and there's no doubt in my mind about it. If I hadn't been in MOVE, by the time the doctors finished probing and experimenting on me with



Three children incinerated by the city of Philadephia on May 13, 1985 in the bombing of MOVE. Two other children and six adults were also incinerated.

medicine and gadgets the cancer would have spread to the point where the only thing left for me was to say goodbye to my family, cause I didn't have a chance, but JOHN AFRICA gave me my life back, gave me the opportunity to live for which I am so grateful, and why I am so committed to my Belief because it works. I've seen, felt MOVE LAW work for me! LONG LIVE JOHN AFRICA FOREVER!

Because of this example I know I can always depend on my Belief to give me everything I need to keep me healthy, strong and free of mental illness. That's something nobody can say about anything in this system. I've found in MOVE LAW my reason for living: satisfaction, happiness and that's what the whole world is searching for and its available for anybody who wants it. After years of being in the system and abused by men who I thought loved me and were faithful to me, but ultimately left me alone and disillusioned, thanks to JOHN AFRICA and our application of MOVE LAW, I finally have a loyal faithful husband and we have a good strong marriage and that's something every woman longs for in the system.

When I look back and see how I was before MOVE and how I am now, I can't help but give my loyalty, my committment to JOHN AFRICA, because without Him, I would be dead. I feel privileged, blessed to be allowed to be a member of MOVE, to help spread the teaching of JOHN AFRICA to the people of the world; to give them the motivation, the will to stop endorsing this system and start fighting it and take back all that it's taken from us! LONG LIVE JOHN AFRICA FOREVER!

I was unjustly sentenced to 30-100 years for the murder of a Philadelphia cop that MOVE is innocent of, and the government knows we're innocent. As of August 8, 1998, the MOVE 9 will have done 20 years in prison. Our parole date is August 8, 2008.

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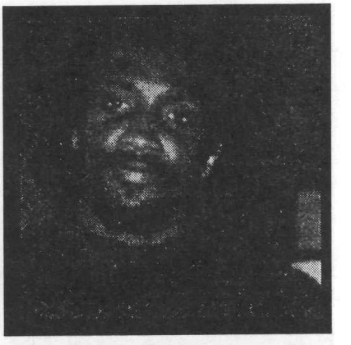

MIKE AFRICA
MOVE Political Prisoner

I am 41 years old and MOVE's Minister of Confrontation.

I was born and raised in West Philly, youngest of 8 children, raised in an environment of poverty, gang war, and all the other afflictions of ghetto life. I started drinking at an early age to hang out with the crowd and eventually ventured over to drugs. I joined the Marines at age 16 to try to stem that spiral, but it definitely made things worse. I wasn't socially conscious about many issues and didn't really care to be. My whole life basically centered around locatin the next happenin party.

I was introduced to some MOVE members by my wife's family, MOVE members had come to aid them during a neighborhood dispute. I later saw some of those same MOVE peole demonstratin against the 16th Police District, a notoriously racist gang known for terrorizin the community where I grew up. The same 16th District that had members of the Black Panthers strip buck naked in front of their H.Q., including pregnant women in the early 70s. Most people I knew hated them, we just feared them more, so while I wasn't immediately attracted to MOVE, I was immediately amazed by their courage. I had never seen people confront the cops the way MOVE did— directly, forcefully and never takin a step back.

In 1974 I attended a demonstration where MOVE was protesting the jailing of 2 of their younger members, age 13 and 15. A judge had them thrown in jail for speaking out against him. The police arrested us all, literally, as we got off the bus, and jailed us on a whole slew of charges. It really scared the hell out of me, but it also let me see more clearly what MOVE was sayin about the system.

From that moment on, I listened more carefully to the teachins of JOHN AFRICA. I became more attracted to the strength it took to confront the system as MOVE did. And as I read more of the Guidelines written by JOHN AFRICA I did become moti-

vated for the first time in my life by something other than diversions, drugs and parties. The more I engaged in MOVE activity, the less I engaged in that other stuff. In the first couple years being around MOVE I went from being a young chain smokin, pill poppin alcoholic, completely apathetic to the problems of virtually everybody, to doin none of those things and being motivated to become a strong revolutionary soldier because of the example I saw being demonstrated by JOHN AFRICA.

Long live JOHN AFRICA!

And that example has only gotten clearer and stronger since I've stayed.

Long Live MOVE, and down with this rotten ass system.

	TIME SPENT IN JAIL (SO FAR)	MURDERS COMMITTED
GOVERNMENT:		
Philadelphia Police	0	1 baby and 4 miscarriages
Philadelphia Sheriffs	0	
Judge Edward Blake	0	
Judge Paul Ribner	0	1 officer
DA Ed Rendell	0	
Judge Fred DiBona	0	
Mayor Frank Rizzo	0	
Police Chief Joseph O'Neill	0	
Police on 33rd St August 8th	0	
Mayor Wilson Goode	0	6 adults and 5 children
Managing Director Leo Brooks	0	
Police Chief Gregore Sambor	0	
Fire Chief William Richmond	0	
Lt. Frank Powell	0	
Officer William Klein	0	
Police on Osage Ave May 13th	0	
FBI and ATF Agents	0	
	0 years	17 murders
MOVE:		
Debbie Africa	18	0
Janine Africa	18	0
Janet Africa	18	0
Merle Africa	18	0
Delbert Africa	18	0
Phil Africa	18	0
Mike Africa	18	0
Chuck Africa	18	0
Edward Africa	18	0
Mumia Abu-Jamal	14 ÷	0
Consuewella Africa	15 ÷	0
Sue Africa	12	0
Carlos Africa	12 ÷	0
Ramona Africa	7	0
Alberta Africa	7	0
Alfonso Africa	5	0
	over 235 years	0 murders

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WILLIAM PHILLIPS AFRICA aka PHIL AFRICA

MOVE Political Prisoner

My name is Phil Africa, a revolutionary disciple of MOVE's revered founder JOHN AFRICA and one of the ministers of defense for the MOVE organization. I have been in forced prison confinement since August 8th, 1978, along with eight of my MOVE sisters and brothers framed for the death of a cop who was killed while participating in the vicious government-directed attack on our Philadelphia Headquarters in its ongoing attempts to stop JOHN AFRICA, a wise, righteous, powerfully strategic black man who generates the MOVE organization. On the morning of August 8, 1978, over 200 heavily armed hitmen for this system known as "police" assaulted our headquarters in what is called by MOVE and grassroots folk as "The August 8th Shoot-In." This was just one of *many* attacks on this organization by this reformed world system in its *attempt* to stop the freedom-generating righteous example of JOHN AFRICA, which is the direction to *true* freedom through *total revolution.* To quote JOHN AFRICA — "It is past time for all poor people to release themselves from the deceptive strangulation of society, realize that society has failed you, for to attempt to ignore this system of deception *now* is to deny *you* the need to protest this failure *later*, the system has failed you yesterday, failed you today and has created the condition for failure tomorrow...." JOHN AFRICA, *Long Live* JOHN AFRICA*'s Revolution*! It is the consistent demonstration by committed MOVE members of "total revolution" taught by JOHN AFRICA as the example to people of the world that the understanding of *natural law/MOVE law* is the solution to *all* problems people are faced with, and I do mean *all* problems! JOHN AFRICA'S teaching — *MOVE law*, shows people clearly how they can live without everything comin' from this rotten reformed world system! This system fears the truth of JOHN AFRICA'S teachin' will be embraced by the world masses this system oppresses, so it's set an all-out goal of

attemptin' to stop JOHN AFRICA. And since all committed MOVE members are examples of JOHN AFRICA'S teachin', we are targeted by this system with its covert and overt attacks just as our brother Mumia Abu-Jamal who was framed up and is now on Penna. death row because of his commitment to MOVE, his embracing the teaching of JOHN AFRICA. Myself along with eight of my sisters and brothers were all given consecutive sentences of 30 to 100 years! The court records list our earliest release date as 2008, but it is clear by this system's murders of our family on May 13, 1985, and the denial of parole to MOVE members on other cases, the fact that our Sis Ramona Africa who survived the murderous bombing of our babies and family May 13th, 1985, had to complete her entire sentence of 7 years in May of 1992! It's clear this system has no intention of releasing us from the 100-year death sentence it

imposes! Our maximum release date is 2078! All of "The MOVE 9" were railroaded into sentences of third degree murder along with a host of other unproven charges totalling up to the 900-year combined sentence! The sentencing judge states the very day after our sentencing on a live radio interview, "He did not know who killed the cop," although all evidence points to his being killed by police crossfire! Meanwhile the murderers of 11 MOVE children, women, men, and animals on May 13th, 1985 shot are known, yet are still holding official positions, still on the loose to continue their terrorist, murderous ways! Just-us American style! But this style of injustice will not last forever, for as JOHN AFRICA explains, "The truth erases the lie and implants itself in the mind forever, for the power of truth grips you forever no matter how evil your lies, your rules, your courts, for truth is the power that overrides evil, the storm that rolls over your rules despite courts, the quake that shakes loose your court despite rules, the blizzard that beats down your courts and your rules, despite how judges see MOVE's chance of winning, MOVE ain't got that worry cause change ain't our reference, you think you can stop us because you been taught this but you were taught also that you control nature, remember how water seems pent in and trapped till the dam breaks and crumbles and dies like it's maker; to blockade life's plan is cruel, fatal, blind, deadly to those that imprison the force to be free..."

From the teaching of JOHN AFRICA, the founder of the MOVE organization. Long Live JOHN AFRICA! To free Mumia, the MOVE 9, and all Political Prisoners, lets keep in mind Unity is the Key to get the job done.

Long Live JOHN AFRICA's
Revolution And Down
With This Rotten System!

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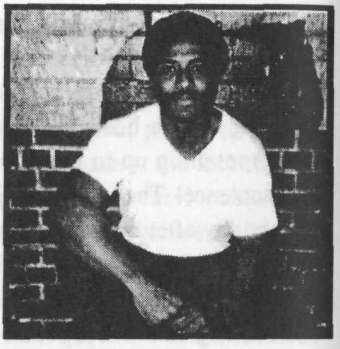

HERMAN BELL
Black Political Prisoner

Born to a family of sharecroppers in rural Mississippi in 1948, Herman Bell experienced the social and economic deprivations of the oppressed nation early in life. Sharecropping was feudalism in its modern day form in which white landowners were the feudal lords and black field-hands were the peasants or serfs. In 1955, he experienced the culture shock of moving from Mississippi to New York and it was here that he grew up while experiencing the social awareness of the times through the freedom rides, speeches of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King and the cultural awareness of James Brown's "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud."

While in college in Oakland, California on a football scholarship, Herman was exposed to the Black Panther Party. He says, "Joining the Black Panther Party was the most logical step to take, as I strongly identified with its survival programs and its efforts to politically educate and organize the black community. The work of the federal and local government agencies under COINTELPRO created an environment that made it impossible to carry out the political agenda of the Black Panther Party. That, along with the fact that irreconcilable differences had reached monumental heights within the leadership of the Party. These two things were responsible for many imprisonments and deaths. The choices were to be killed, go underground or leave the country. I chose to stay and struggle."

Joining the Black Panther Party was the most logical step to take, as I strongly identified with its survival programs and its efforts to politically educate and organize the black community.

On September 2, 1973 Herman Bell was captured, extradited to New York City and subsequently tried and railroaded to prison for life with the possibility of parole only after serving 25 years of a life sentence. All of this part of COINTELPRO's successful strategy to

criminalize the Black Liberation Movement.

Herman Bell is one of the New York 3 (Herman Bell, Anthony Jalil Bottom and Albert Nuh Washington). Since his capture he, along with other political prisoners, have been singled out for special mis-treatment in an attempt to get them to renounce their political beliefs and break their spirits.

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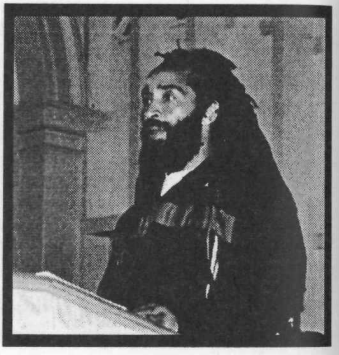
Can't Jail the Spirit



Veronza Bowers, Jr. was one of the principle organizers of the Black Panther Party Chapter in Omaha, Nebraska in the late 60s. The chapter's life in Omaha was short lived due to the many factors, not the least being the intensified police reaction. Veronza (known in the Party as Daoud) resurfaced in California to take on the responsibilities as captain of the Richmond Branch.

VERONZA BOWERS
Black Political Prisoner

By 1973 Veronza had been targeted by COINTELPRO, captured by the state, charged, tried and convicted of the murder of a National Park Service Ranger. With there being no physical evidence to connect him to the death of the Ranger, the government fabricated evidence in order to ensure a conviction. This tactic was used as a part of the FBI's Counterintelligence Program to destroy people and organizations they considered "politically dangerous" to the national security of the United States of America. The Black Panther Party was targeted under this program as a Black Extremist Organization, and Veronza, along with many other Panthers, was caught in their web.

In Veronza's own words:

"I was arrested on September 15, 1973, in Mill Valley, California on state charges of robbery, receiving and possession of stolen property pursuant to a federal search warrant. A small army of FBI, Marin County Sheriffs, Berkeley and Oakland City detectives, and Animal Shelter police made a pre-dawn raid which netted four adults, three children and two German shephards.

"In state court all of the state charges were dismissed because, as the superior court judge as well as the California State Supreme Court said: 'No probable cause for the issuance of the search warrant can be found within its four corners.' Then the feds stepped back in and charged me with first degree murder of a National Park Service Ranger."

Veronza was convicted primarily on the words of two "informants" collaboration. One was a known drug dealer who corroborated the main informant's testimony in exchange for $10,000, the dis-

missal of two counts of possession for sale and distribution of narcotics (each carrying heavy sentences in the state of California at the time), and he was rewarded further with a gift of a new 1973 Grand Prix Pontiac. The main "toy maniquin" was also rewarded with $10,000, had his unrelated bank robbery conviction sentence of 12 years modified and he served 2 years at a federal camp in Allenwood, Pennsylvania and even more sinister, even though he was first indicted for the murder of the Ranger, in exchange for his "co-operation" the murder indictment against him was dismissed.

Of all of that, Veronza writes: "As you can see, my original case is full of all sorts of intrigue, smoky back room, under-the-table, behind the back, shady dealings. COINTELPRO was very busy back in those days. They had to stop us at all cost, . . . and they did!

"I was tried primarily on the words of two Judas priests bearing lies and they called me guilty. I was convicted and sentenced to a life term and have languished behind prison walls ever since."

Veronza is now 52 years old, a father and a grandfather twice. He has served over twenty-four years in maximum security prisons in the federal system, yet he has remained committed to the struggle of his people through his politics, writing and music.

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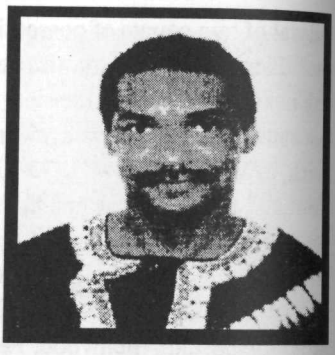
Terre Haute, IN 47808

Imprisoned since April 1970, Marshall Eddie Conway was a leading member of the Baltimore Chapter of the Black Panther Party. He was arrested, charged with and convicted of the fatal shooting of one Baltimore policeman and the attempted murder of two others. The arrest and conviction was part of the repressive domestic covert operation called COINTELPRO.



MARSHALL EDDIE CONWAY

Black Political Prisoner

The case against Eddie consisted entirely of the testimonies of a paid jailhouse informer and a police officer. There was no physical evidence linking Eddie and there were no other witnesses. The informer, an experienced operative placed in Eddie's cell over his objections, claimed Eddie had confessed to him. Eddie has steadfastly maintained his innocence and that he was singled out for imprisonment because of his leadership within the Party, as well as his work of exposing police agents within the Baltimore Chapter.

One of the ways that the Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) worked to destroy the Black Panther Party was to arrest, charge and imprison members of the Black Panther Party. High bails were set and other finances were drained for attorneys to represent Panthers. By the time Eddie's case went to trial there were limited financial resources and no legal defense team available.

COINTELPRO had done its job well. Eddie was convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

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The Marshall E. Conway Support Committee
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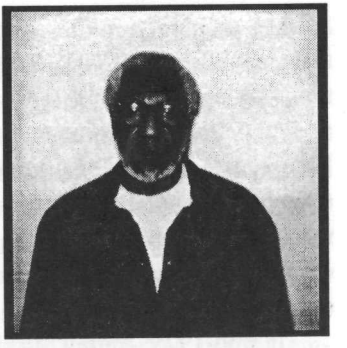
Baltimore, MD 20794



MARK COOK
Black Political Prisoner

Mark Cook, a 61-year-old Black man, was born October 26, 1936, in Seattle, Washington. His father, who worked as a "redcap" (railroad station worker), died when Mark was four years old. His mother worked as domestic help seven days a week and often 16 hours a day to care for Mark, his two sisters and five brothers.

He gained his formal education in the Washington State school systems, attending three colleges and majoring in mathematics. His secondary was social science. His frustration with not being able to find steady work led to his committing robberies which resulted in convictions and long periods of incarceration. While in prison he realized that the denial of labor rights was more severe in prison than the denial of labor rights in the outside world regarding non-union workers.

Mark was attracted by the political articulations of the Black Panther Party (BPP), especially the dictum concerning labor rights and the franchise rights of Blacks and poor working-class folks. In 1967, while still in prison, he joined the BPP and became a lieutenant of information for the Walla Walla, Washington, Chapter of the BPP. In 1972, he was released to a halfway house in Seattle. While there he attended college, and in furtherance of his political concerns founded CONVENTION '73, a political organization demanding labor rights and franchise rights for prisoners and ex-prisoners. While still in the halfway house, he provided a public forum under the banner of CONVENTION '73 that involved attendance and participation for prisoners and guards from major prisons in Washington State as well as folks representing organizations and personal interests both locally and nationally.

In 1973, Mark paroled from the halfway house and continued to hold yearly forums for CONVENTION for the years 1974 and 1975, which grew in attendance and participation and public respect. He was a single parent carrying a full college program, working full-time as an upholsterer.

Police and government interest in

Mark's political activities was noted by their surveillance of CONVENTION activities—taking photos of those in attendance at CONVENTION forums and recording license plate numbers of autos of those who attended. Complaints by Mark and others to higher authorities met with some success—at least further surveillance was not so obvious.

In mid-1975, Autrey Stirgis, a former prison associate of Mark's, advised him that he was under surveillance by the Seattle Police Department's Intelligence Unit, as they believed he was involved in the political activities of the George Jackson Brigade (GJB). The GJB was a group of political activists who used armed struggle to support labor rights and franchise rights of workers in general, and of prisoners and specifically Native Americans at the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations. The GJB waged armed struggle against government and private property in defiance of violations of labor rights and franchise rights. Stirgis advised Mark that one Sgt. Whalen of the Seattle Intelligence Unit wanted him and his woman companion, Suzzane Weisfield (Suzzane LeBray) to be informants for them as they were interested in discovering the membership of the George Jackson Brigade.

Later, in January of 1976, at least four members of the GJB attempted to expropriate funds from a bank, which resulted in a gunfight. Three members were captured and one escaped in the getaway car. One of the members, Bruce Seidel was fatally wounded; another, John Sherman, was shot in the face and suffered a broken jaw. March 10, 1976, John was taken to the King County Hospital in Seattle during a final series of follow-up treatments. While leaving the hospital with his armed guard he was liberated by armed members of the GJB. The guard was shot during the incident. The night of March 10th the Seattle Police implemented a dragnet and picked up all Black men off the streets and from public places having the general description of the Black men involved in the liberation of John Sherman. Mark was arrested as he came out of a laundromat near his home. He was held for several hours, photographed, and released without questioning.

March 12, 1976, Mark was arrested at his home by federal authorities for aiding in the January bank robbery attempt based on information of unnamed informants. These unnamed informants have never been disclosed to this day. In March 1976 he was charged by federal in-

Mark was attracted by the political articulations of the Black Panther Party (BPP), especially the dictum concerning labor rights and the franchise rights of Blacks and poor working-class folks.

dictment with the bank robbery and using a firearm to commit a felony. In May 1976 the indictment was amended to include conspiracy to rob banks, to aid in escapes, and to rescue and to harbor fugitives. Following the federal indictment, Washington State authorities charged him by information with first degree assault in two counts involving the gunfight at the bank robbery and the shooting of the guard during the escape. The state also charged him in a third count with aiding in the escape. Based primarily on the testimony of Autrey Stirgis and Suzzane Weisfield, who were paid up to $20,000 and given changes in identity and relocation by federal authorities, Mark was convicted first in federal court, then in state court. He is presently serving a 30-year federal term and has been advised that he will not be given a parole. His projected release date, minus good time credits, will be in 1992. His state sentence of life plus ten years is to run consecutive to his federal term.

Although both the federal court and the state court denied prosecution requests to introduce information regarding the GJB or CONVENTION into the proceedings, the federal authorities have placed an extensive document called "The 1977 Political Statement of the George Jackson Brigade" in his prison file as political reason for keeping him in prison.

Mark's politics are simply articulated where he states: "There are two classes of people in this world, those who work and those who do not work. The foundation of economy, government, and society is based on the performance of the worker. Because of the importance of the workers, all *workers*, they have inherent labor and franchise rights that must never be limited by government or non-worker caprice. 'Free labor' means the worker is free to set the terms and conditions of labor premised on fairness to *both* the worker and the employer. Where that freedom is lost, labor is entitled to regain that freedom by any means necessary."

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BASHIR HAMEED

Black Liberation Army Political Prisoner

I was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, in December of 1940, the second oldest in a family of six children. I grew up in a little town just southwest of Elizabeth and north of Rahway, New Jersey, home of the infamous Rahway State Prison.

My father was a butcher, and though he wasn't an educated man, having dropped out of school during his elementary school years, he stressed getting an education or developing a skill/trade to all of his children. He constantly used the newspapers to show me examples of racism in America. He also told me about the various achievements of Blacks and refused to allow us to act in deferring ways to whites. Both parents made great sacrifices to try to provide a decent life under the circumstances—for that I shall be forever grateful to them.

I attended a racially mixed high school and experienced the subtle forms of racism so prevailing in the north during that period. After graduating in 1958 I went to Delaware State College in Dover on an athletic scholarship.

Though just three hours away from New York City by car, Delaware was like going back in time. Food service and hotel/motel accomodations were denied Blacks throughout the area. Students were refused service at the local Howard Johnson. While traveling to play other Black colleges in the area (Howard, Maryland State, Hampton, etc.) our stops and accomodations all had to be arranged at Black hotels/restaurants, etc. All of this, mind you, while we were being taught that America was the land of opportunity, equal rights, and fair play.

All of this, mind you, while we were being taught that America was the land of opportunity, equal rights, and fair play.

Totally disgusted with blaring contradictions and the obsequious posture taken by

school administrators towards the local white establishment, I returned to New Jersey the following year and attended Seton Hall University for a year. Tiring of that too, I decided to see the world and joined the U.S. Army in early '61. After numerous run-ins due to the racism there I parted with them in the summer of '61 with a general discharge, to both my relief and the Army's.

Still undecided about goals in life I returned to Delaware State that fall and completed another year. By now the student sit-in movement was hot and heavy on Black campuses across the South. I did not participate because of a low level of political consciousness and sense enough not to buy the nonviolent philosophy which was the theme of the movement. I had also during this period been exposed to Malcolm, having seen him at rallies in New York City. I also attended the Nation of Islam's Sunday services, though never embracing its philosophy.

In January '63 I got married and moved to Jersey City, New Jersey. I became the father of a son that year and resided in that area moving from job to job for the next few years. After the marriage failed in early '68, I moved to Berkeley, California.

While working and living there in the Bay Area I began to earnestly follow the happenings with the Black Panther Party. Huey Newton's trial was taking place during this time and I followed it in the local papers. Towards the end of '68 I started going by the party's headquarters. After attending classes and participating in the party's new free breakfast program at St. Augustine Church, I fell in love with the party, its philosophy and people.

In early '69 I was sent back to New Jersey to try and help restructure the remnants of the New Jersey Chapter of the BPP which had already come under attack by the U.S. government and local police. The leadership of the Jersey City branch had been jailed for allegedly machine-gunning a local police precinct. The Newark branch office had been bombed and both branches were in a shambles.

The local police immediately started to harass me and my family. In no time at all I had been arrested numerous times while selling the party's paper, driving, and participating in community issues. We were able to reestablish the Jersey City branch and developed several free breakfast programs, free clothing drives, political education classes, etc., there in the community. The attacks and frame-ups on various charges continued against

After attending classes and participating in the party's new free breakfast program at St. Augustine Church, I fell in love with the party, its philosophy and people.

party members.

By the fall of 1970 I was either doing time in one of the county jails there or facing charges on several others, all for arrests while doing daily party work. Facing over twenty years because of this, I left.

I was arrested a year later and sentenced to Trenton State Prison, where I ended up doing four years. While there Sundiata Acoli, John "Andaliwa" Clark, Kwesi Balagoon, myself and others developed a study group. In September '75 I was released. In January '76 there was an attempted prison break in which Andaliwa was murdered and a prison captain shot. Having just been released I was a prime suspect as an outside source. Realizing my plight and not having much faith in the criminal justice system, I left the area.

In April '81 a van was stopped by two New York City cops in St. Albans, Queens. Two Black men exited the van, advanced on the police car, and fired into it 27 times. One cop died, the other was wounded. A week later, another BPP member, Abdul Majid/Anthony La Borde, and I were suspected of it. I was subsequently arrested in Sumter, S.C., four months later. Abdul the following year.

The first trial in '82 ended in a hung jury on the murder charge, two not-guilty charges for assault, and a guilty charge of 2nd degree attempted murder.

The second trial was hung again after being declared a mistrial with the jury 8 to 4 for not guilty. The state realizing its plight instituted a rein of terror in '86 against family and friends. Three people, none of whom were in the state of N.Y. during the time of incident, were brought to trial and stated that we admitted while in their company months later having been participants or in the area during the time of this act.

We were sentenced to 30+ years-to-life with the recommendation that we never be paroled.

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Brooklyn, NY 11247

ROBERT SETH' HAYES

Revolutionary Greetings,

Freedom Fighters, Comrades, Supporters and Prisoners of Consciousness Worldwide

My name is Robert Seth' Hayes. A former member of the Black Panther Party and captured soldier of the Black Liberation Army. My incarceration began on September 17, 1973 and as of this day in January 1998, I am serving the 24th year of my incarceration. My conviction camouflages the will and determination of Afrikan People like myself, living in America, to end discrimination, persecution and oppression. Being prosecuted as a common criminal, rather than a Prisoner of War/Political Prisoner allowed America's fascist leadership to continue on the one hand, unabated genocide operations on America's population as a whole, and the removal of liberating combatants on the other. Though removed, we have nevertheless continued the struggle. In light of that fact, I would like to take a moment out and thank Brother Comrade Jalil (Anthony Bottoms) Muntaqin for his insight and contribution of **JERICHO '98**. Its start up date is both timely and beneficial tome as I have make my first appearance before the Parole Board in 1998. At that time, I will have served 25 years of this bid.

Even though both of our contributions are far greater than briefly listed here, I wish only to embark on a small segment of our history as a contribution to the overall contributions offered by our many Brothers and Sisters in Struggle. In closing let me emphasize my ready commitment to Afrikan Liberation primarily and the ending of genocide acts worldwide.

BTW
Pave the Way.

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Can't Jail the Spirit

SEKOU CINQUE T.M. KAMBUI

Sekou Cinque T.M. Kambui (s/n William J. Turk) is a New Afrikan political prisoner currently serving two consecutive life sentences for crimes he did not commit. Sekou has already spent twenty years of his life behind bars on trumped up charges of murdering two white men in Alabama in 1975.

Sekou is of Afrikan/Cherokee heritage, born on September 6, 1948 in Gasden, Alabama. He was raised by his mother, grandparents and aunt in Detroit, Harlem, New York and Birmingham, Alabama, respectively. He is presently 48 years old. Throughout the 1960s Sekou participated in the Civil Rights movement, organizing youth for participating in demonstrations and marches across Alabama and providing security for meetings of the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Sekou is a paralegal professional and had been active jailhouse lawyer and prisoner's rights activist for more than 20 years.

Sekou became affiliated with the Black Panther Party in 1967 in Chicago and New York. While in Detroit, he became a member of the Republic of New Afrika, before returning to Birmingham. Back in Alabama, Sekou coordinated community organization activity with the Alabama Black Liberation Front, the Inmate for Action (IFA) Defense Committee and the Afro-American People's Party in the mid 1970s. Sekou was also a soldier in the Black Liberation Army (BLA) during these years before his capture.

On January 2, 1975 Sekou was captured in north Birmingham for allegedly running a yield sign and/or speeding. During this stop a 9mm pistol was found in the car lying between the front seats, supposedly cocked and fully loaded. Subsequent investigation by police on the scene discovered that the pistol was listed as stolen during a Tuscaloosa, Alabama murder. A wide ranging investigation followed, which included inquiries into

Defense witnesses in the first trial were so terrified after continuous threats and racial intimidation by the Birmingham Police for providing alibi testimony that they fled Alabama...

his personal relationship with a white woman. At one point during the investigation, while being transported, Sekou was told by one of the investigators, "...we don't really give a damn whether you committed these crimes or not, but you should have because we're gonna hang your ass with them anyway. . ." Sekou was falsely arrested and charged with the murder of two white men: a KKK official from Tuscaloosa, Alabama and a multi-millionaire oil man out of Birmingham.

It's not surprising that Sekou was found guilty of both murders in separate trials. Did Sekou have a chance of being found innocent? If one considers the nature of the case in that there was a Black man standing accused of killing two white men in Alabama of 1975, then the initial conclusion must be "no." But when the Black man is considered an "Uppity Nigger" out to cause trouble by the White power structure, coupled with the subsequent (and what can be assumed, continual) involvement of the FBI, our initial conclusion becomes a proven fact. On this basis alone, Sekou was presumed guilty.

Despite immense pre-trial publicity, the court denied a motion for a change of venue. An appeals court later affirmed this decision, citing examples of ineffectiveness of the counselor. In fact, the nature of this case was so intense that during a 1985 investigation of the crime, persons in Tuscaloosa vividly recalled details of the murder, the accused (Sekou) and the entire issue of the killing. Major witnesses in both cases admitted during this same investigation that they had been forced to testify against Sekou and had been repeatedly visited by certain members of the Birmingham Police Department, as well as the Jefferson County Sheriffs Department. Defense witnesses in the first trial were so terrified after continuous threats and racial intimidation by the Birmingham Police for providing alibi testimony that they fled Alabama, leaving Sekou without a defense for his second trial. To this day, Sekou has never been placed at or near either murder scene, no murder weapon was found, nor any direct evidence offered to connect Sekou to the murders. The pistol he was captured with has never been conclusively linked to the crimes.

Sekou's legal challenges to both convictions have been continuously thwarted by the Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) through the seizure of legal material and mail, repeated retailiatory transfers and threats to interfere with pending parole dates.

" ...we don't really give a damn whether you committed these crimes or not, but you should have because we're gonna hand your ass with them anyway. . ."

For twenty years now, Sekou has been held captive in Ala-

bama. He is well known to nearly every Warden, Regional Coordinator and higher level official in the ADOC. As a jailhouse lawyer, his legal reputation precedes him at every institution. In fact, many prisoners owe their freedom to Sekou's legal efforts on their behalf. He has won numerous other civil actions regarding medical malpractice, abusive treatment, abusive segregation, and abusive prison conditions; all of which have earned him nothing but retaliatory transfers and continuing unabated enmity by officials of the ADOC. It is impossible to relate the depth of hostility encountered by Sekou personally and by his family not only from the ADOC but also from the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles. Every attempt made to appeal his original conviction has been stymied by missing trial transcripts, illegal confiscation of lawbooks and legal research/trial preparation material, etc.

In the last ten years, Sekou has been up for parole five times and has been denied each time. Prior to every parole consideration there has been a punitive transfer and an escalation of harassment due to a legal action taken by Sekou on behalf of other prisoners.

Sekou stands with those of us struggling for a better world free of the racism and injustice that have put him in a cage; the symptoms of a sick society which we all suffer from.

Bus burning during the Freedom Rides of early sixties.

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WOPASHITWE MONDO EYEN WE LANGA

African Political Prisoner

On August 27th, 1970, I turned myself over to an African member of the Omaha Police Department at the North Omaha Police-Community Relations Office. Community Chambers and a number of other African community leaders were there at the office, as was my attorney, and other folks. The presence of many of these people had been prearranged as a precautionary measure against some "accident" in which a police weapon might discharge and I would wind up, like so many other Panthers across the country, dead. I didn't have much choice other than turning myself in, realistically, because I hadn't seen the need to connect myself with any kind of underground. I couldn't see spending the rest of my life in hiding, always wondering who I could trust. In any case, I was tried and convicted of first degree murder in April of 1971 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Until seven or eight years ago or so, I was known as "David Rice." I chose a name, "Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa," which, in the African languages of Kwanyama, Gikuyu, Ibibio, and Hausa, means: "Wild (Natural) Man Child of the Sun." I chose a name that would, among other things, reflect my African heritage. This choosing of a name, it is part of the process of growth. My involvement in the Omaha chapter of the National Committees to Combat Fascism (NCCF), the organizing arm of the Black Panther Party, back in 1969 was also part of the process of my growth.

I chose a name that would, among other things, reflect my African heritage. This choosing of a name, it is part of the process of growth.

I was, I think, a junior in high school when I began to truly see that racism and injustice generally might be more than just ab-

errations in the U.S. political/economic system. By 1968, I was convinced that the oppression of African people, and other people of color, in this country was no accident, no mere flaw in the system.

In the Summer of 1970, prior to my arrest, I was Deputy Minister of Information of the Omaha chapter of NCCF; editor of the chapter's newsletter, FREEDOM BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY, and was writing in other alternative newspapers and newsletters; was co-chairperson of Ward II of the Democratic Party and a member of its State Central Committee; was working with Mothers for Adequate Welfare and numerous other groups and, generally, was doing all I thought I could do to increase folks' awareness — particularly, African folks — of the nature of their subjugation. I was, as were the Omaha NCCF chapter and the Black Panther Party nationwide, very critical of the police. We called them "pigs." Police murder of African people — not including the countless questionable killings by police of unarmed African people — were common across the country. And the results of "investigations" were almost always the same: justifiable homicide, accidental death, etc. We told people that they had a right to defend themselves against police attack and believed in this principle for ourselves.

I regret nothing of these positions which I took or actions I was involved in.

I regret nothing of these positions which I took or actions I was involved in. I do regret having not been perceptive enough about the desire on the parts of the FBI and police departments around the country to destroy the Black Panther Party — murder in the cases of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in Chicago, life imprisonment in my case and that of Ed Poindexter, who was Deputy Chairman of the Omaha NCCF chapter. I regret that I had not established the kinds of contacts that would have enabled me to get out of the country on that early morning in August, about a week after Larry Minard of the Omaha Police Department had been killed by a booby-trapped suitcase in a vacant house, when I heard on the car radio that the police had "found" dynamite in my house and knew that it had to have been planted. It is one thing to be intellectually aware of the fact that a person can be set-up or murdered or discredited — all things which happened under the authority of the FBI's COINTELPRO (counter-intelligence program) during the mid-sixties through early seventies and which happen today when government and police agencies deem such activities useful — but quite another thing to be faced, all of a sudden, with the realization that such is not something you're reading or hearing about but that it is actually happening to you.

I had been in life-threatening situations, various kinds of con-

frontations with police that could have escalated to the point of killing and dying. But none of these situations had really caused me fear. But the knowledge that I was being set up, that I would have to face a scenario which I would probably have no control over, scared me. I had never known such fear. And the fear proved to be justified. Months later, I would attend a trial in which a sixteen-year-old African youth, Duane Peak, would falsely implicate me in order to save his own life (he had been threatened with death in the electric chair. Would I have done different at such a young age?); in which I, an African, would be prosecuted by a Caucasian county attorney, sit in proceedings presided over by a Caucasian judge, have my fate decided by a Caucasian jury, and be represented by Caucasian counsel; in which the prosecutor and various prosecution witnesses would use the public record of my political beliefs to convince the jury that I deserved punishment regardless of whether the evidence against me was factual or sufficient; and in which the judge would allow the prosecution to bring forward both manufactured and irrelevant exhibits in order to stupefy the members of the jury.

The verdict was "guilty." But all that time, juries in this state also did sentencing in first degree murder cases. I was sentenced, as was Poindexter, to life imprisonment. But this was a case of two Africans who called police "pigs," who preached self-defense against unprovoked police attack, who called for revolutions, and who occasionally carried guns. Had that jury been convinced of my guilt, it is inconceivable that I would have been sentenced to anything other than death. That jury had deliberated from Wednesday to Saturday. Its members, or some of its members, were not convinced beyond a reasonable doubt. Rather, they simply could not let an African man who called police "pigs" get away with that.

In August of this year, I will have been locked up twenty-eight years. I have been fighting my conviction, with the help of lawyers, loved ones, and supporters, all this time. I have watched as other prisoners have come and gone, seen some of them return as many as a half dozen times; have seen men who were sentenced to life commuted to specific terms of years, seen them go out on parole; have been before the parole board and been told that I would be recommended for a commutation after I would have served fifteen years and later read in

In August of this year, I will have been locked up twenty-eight years. I have been fighting my conviction, with the help of lawyers, loved ones, and supporters, all this time.

the newspaper, after I had served more than fifteen years, that the parole board had decided upon a new policy — that persons doing first degree life sentences in connection with the death of a policeman would have to serve at least twenty years.

The fact is, though, that I have never asked the parole board or the board of pardons for a commutation of sentence, a parole, or a pardon because I cannot ask, will not ask, to be pardoned for my beliefs. I am not ashamed of my beliefs. I cannot and will not ask for a pardon for a killing which I knew nothing about. I could, of course, bury my identity, project a new image, and trade in my honest assessment of what I see going on in the U.S. for a rhetoric of expedience. I could lower my head and hide integrity in my pocket. It would be the "practical" thing to do. I could present to be a "good black American" with changed leopard spots. But as much as I want out of this house of cages, I happen to be one of those impractical people who believes he should call things as he sees them. And the fact is that this is the same U.S. as it was when I was locked up almost twenty years ago. There is still no justice for African people, for Chicanos, Native Americans and other people of color. Economically, the level of injustice has intensified. Millions of people have no jobs; many of those have turned their lives over to drugs and alcohol. African people in this country have become expendable. Young people are killing and dying over tennis shoes, gold chains, etc., while the commercial media bombards them with the message that they have no worth but that given to them by the things they accumulate. The situation is worse now than it was when I was locked up. I have to call things the way I see them. Unfortunately, I've had to pay a high price for this practice.

Note: At least six men who were serving, like myself, life sentences or convictions of first degree murder and who were tried and convicted since the time that I was have been released on parole. My case is not presently in court. My petition for writ of habeas corpus, which had been stuck in court for at least six years, was rejected by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals early in 1991.

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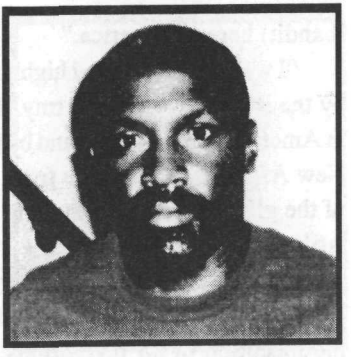

OJORE NURU LUTALO

Ojore Nuru Lutalo is a New Afrikan anarchist Prisoner of War locked down in the Management Control Unit of New Jersey State Prison. He has been held in isolation/sensory deprivation since February 4, 1986 because of his political beliefs and activities. In Ojore's own words, he is "serving a parole violation sentence (14 to 17 years) stemming from a 1977 conviction for expropriating monies from a capitalist state bank (in order to finance our activities) and engaging the political police in a gun battle in December 1975 in order to effect our departure from the bank and to ensure success of the military operation . . ."

"After my parole violation term terminated, I started serving a forty year sentence with a 20 year parole ineligibility in December 1987(I was paroled in 1980 and I have been back in captivity since April 20, 1982) that I had received in 1982 for having a gun fight with a drug dealer. The overall strategy of assulting a drug dealer is to secure monies to finance one's activities and to rid the oppressed community of drug dealers."

Ojore was originally arrested with New Afrikan POW Kojo Bomani Sababu and was struggling with Andaliwa Clark up until the point that Andaliwa was killed in action within the confines of New Jersey's infamous Trenton State Prison after he shot two prison security guards in the repressive Management Control Unit (MCU) on January 19, 1976 when they tried to stop him from escaping from captivity.

Ojore was a comrade of Kuwasi Balagoon, a New Afrikan anarchist POW. "I've been involved in the struggle, the war against the fascist state since 1970. I've been an anarchist since 1975 without any regrets. Prior to my involvement in the struggle, I was just another apolitical lumpen

He has been held in isolation/sensory deprivation since February 4, 1986 because of his political beliefs and activities.

(bandit) here in America."

"I was influenced and highly motivated by the Black Liberation Army (BLA) here in America. These sisters and brothers were New Afrikans just like me from the streets of the ghettos who took the initiative militarily, to start assassinating members of the state's security forces who were murdering black people in our communities. From the inception of all revolutions I feel that people need armed units to check state sponsored terrorism. In 1975 I became disillusioned with Marxism and became an anarchist (thanks to Kuwasi Balagoon) due to the inactiveness and ineffectiveness of Marxism in our communities along with repressive bureaucracy that comes with Marxism. People aren't going to commit themselves to a life and death struggle just because of grand ideas someone might have floating around in their heads. I feel people will commit themselves to a struggle if they can see progress being made similar to the progress of anarchist collectives in Spain during the era of the fascist Bahamonde."

Ojore is presently locked down in the MCU in Trenton. He is allowed out of the cage once every 46 hours for an hour and a half rec. Other than that, he is entombed constantly. "I'm encased in a cage of steel and concrete surrounded by high prison walls topped with gun towers and rows of razor wire while being watched by sadistic fascist pigs. Nevertheless, I'm not complaining because I have accepted revolution, which is an armed struggle for me and I have come to terms with the prospects of death and captivity. The vast majority of Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners now being interned here in the concentration camps of North America aren't receiving any assistance from the so-called progressive revolutionary organizations, groups and individuals. With our talents we have been abandoned here in the state's numerous concentration camps by those out there in what we call minimum custody. We don't need moral support because we have purpose. We don't need anyone to tell us to stay strong because we are going to remain steadfast anyway, because we have come to terms with the prospects of death and captivity."

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ABDUL MAJID

Black Liberation Army Political Prisoner

My name is Abdul Majid, formerly Anthony LaBorde. I was born on June 25, 1949, in Flushing, New York. I am the father of four children, and the fourth child of five boys. My two elder brothers are deceased as is my father. My mother lives in Jamaica, New York.

My political awareness began in earnest when I was 15 years old, around the time of the murder of El Hajj Abdul Malik Shabazz (Malcolm X). I can recall vividly in 1962-63 many of the news accounts of the struggle in Africa, particularly the Congo; the murder of Patrice Lumumba and several other patriots of the national liberation struggle in Southern Africa, and the civil rights (national liberation) struggle in amerikkka by people of African descent. I realized, despite geographical differences, the stunning similarities between the oppressed as well as the oppressors both here and there.

As a result of this awareness, I began working with other brothers in Jamaica, Queens, starting the Grass Roots Advisory Council. We attempted to get funding from the poverty programs in the community with no success. After about two years of this we realized the limitations placed upon us struggling in this manner. By this time I became involved with the Black Panther Party and the Republic of New Africa. I found both of these organizations to be much more relevant and effective with respect to issues affecting our people. I worked in various programs such as free breakfasts for children, free clothing, liberation schools for youth, and adult political education classes, all with positive results. The Party and the RNA were also involved in important community issues, i.e., community control of the murderous police department and community control of the schools, as well as the struggle around health care in our communities. I was also in a

We attempted to get funding from the poverty programs in the community with no success.

leadership position which required more and more time working with new party members. From 1968 to 1971, I was a full-time Party member.

Needless to say, I became a target of this government's "law enforcement establishment" (COINTELPRO) for my political work, along with thousands of other activists. Recently, some of the underhanded operations to disrupt, frame, and murder many of the imprisoned freedom fighters are coming to light.

In the spring of 1981, much to my surprise, I became a primary suspect in the shooting death of one cop and the wounding of another. Being familiar with how the police react to attacks on them, I decided not to wait for them to come to me. This led to a nine-month search-and-destroy campaign by the government both nationally and internationally. While being hunted by these gestapo I attempted to maintain a normal existence with aid from family and friends.

I was finally arrested in January 1982 by the Philadelphia gestapo after a physical confrontation with them during which I sustained injuries to my head. I was transported back to New York City to stand trial with Bashir Hameed (James York), who had been apprehended in Sumpter, South Carolina, for murder and attempted murder of the same two cops.

After five years and three trials the state was finally able to engineer a trumped up conviction with flimsy and circumstantial evidence. I was sentenced to 33 ⅓ years to life total on the two counts. Some five years after the murder conviction, our case was finally heard by the appellate division, second department (N.Y.), November 19, 1991. True to form of not dealing with the law where political prisoners are concerned, the court pandered to the desires of the "law enforcement" community. The court wasted no time in dispensing "justice" by issuing what has to be the fastest decision in its history (December 19, 1991). Just one month later the court affirmed this conviction. This was no mean feat for the court considering the fact that it has the largest caseload of any state appellate court in the nation and is backlogged by over one calendar year with cases waiting to either be heard or waiting for rulings on cases already heard, according to court personnel. After a motion for re-argument the appellate court remitted the case for a hearing on our Batson claim (Batson vs. Kentucky) wherein we raised the issue of racial discrimination during jury

By this time I became involved with the Black Panther Party and the Republic of New Africa. I found both of these organizations to be much more relevant and effective with respect to issues affecting our people.

selection. After a hearing the appellate court reinstated its original decision. Our last resort in state court was denied June '96 by the New York court of appeals. We are presently in the U.S. District Court of New York on a writ of Habeas Corpus.

The government has been very uncooperative about turning over requested documents being sought by me under the Freedom of Information Act. During the three trials there were deliberate acts by law enforcement agencies to hide certain evidence helpful to the defense. Attorneys are still in the process of trying to make law enforcement agencies turn over all evidence in this case. In spite of my long incarceration, prison has not broken my spirit of struggle. I have been been harassed, seriously assaulted twice, and denied proper medical treatment as a result of the assaults. I have also been refused certain programs offered to the general population because of my political background.

However, the government has not been totally successful in its attempts to criminalize our struggle for self-determination. The masses do understand the courageous positions of those who are jailed as a result of their political acts. It will be just a matter of time before that understanding by the masses turns into action. While we have had setbacks as a result of subterfuge and subversion from both within and without, we must intensify our current efforts to mobilize the masses for survival and liberation. I believe the only real guarantee we prisoners of war and political prisoners have of staying alive and surviving these prisoner-of-war camps is by keeping our conditions and status before the public both domestically and internationally.

Insha ALLAH (ALLAH willing) we will get the relief (freedom) denied us the last 400 years in Babylon.

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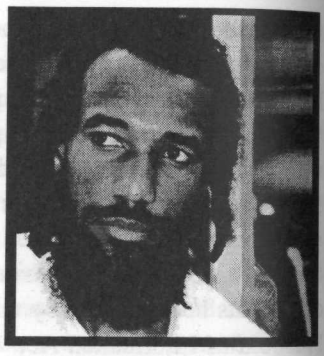

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

Surely, all praise is due to Allah. We praise Him and we seek His aid, and we seek His forgiveness, and we seek refuge in Allah from the evil of ourselves and from the wickedness of our deeds. Whoever Allah guides, there is none who can mislead him, and whoever Allah leaves astray,

JIHAD ABDUL-MUMIT

there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and He is alone and without partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

Kwame Nkrumah, the late Prime Minister of Ghana, once said to the effect: In the struggle for freedom, prison is inevitable! And so it is with whoever and wherever people stand up against injustice and oppression and seek to attain their true liberation and independence.

I was born on August 30, 1954, in Somerspoint, New Jersey, and raised by my parents, Robert and Elizabeth Bryant, in Plainfield, New Jersey. Quality reading and studying was always encouraged at home, and consequently, I took a liking to it and did very well in school. As a teenager, I was deeply influenced by the writings of people like W.E.B. DuBois, Frederick Douglas, Lerone Bennett, Angela Davis, El Hajj Malik El Shabazz, George Jackson, Karl Marx, Mao Tse-tung, and Huey Newton. Consequently, I joined the Black Panther Party at 16. This was a time of intense activism, protest and struggle. It was a time when people referred to each other as brother and sister, and staged massive demonstrations in the streets against the war in Vietnam.

Instead of focusing on sponsoring parties on the weekends, we immediately challenged the curriculum and demanded more Black studies and teachers.

In the beginning of the 12th grade, I was elected President of the Black Student Union at

Plainfield High School. Instead of focusing on sponsoring parties on the weekends, we immediately challenged the curriculum and demanded more Black studies and teachers. Contradictions within the Panther Party and the heightening of the struggle drove me underground in the ranks of the Black Liberation Army.

In 1972 my comrade, Ashanti Omowali Ramu, and I were arrested and charaged with killing a policeman. We were both acquitted in 1973 and continued our involvement in the Black Liberation Movement. Not satisfied with the verdict, unidentified persons threatened and harassed my family and I to the extent where I took on an alias and moved to Rochester, New York. There I, along with some very beautiful and dedicated young comrades, formed the Rochester Federation of Youth, an organization which sponsored regular political education (PE) and history classes in the community, organized young adults and teens around revolutionary goals and objectives, worked with juvenile delinquents and students rights, and contributed to community economic development by establishing a fresh produce business. We had our own newspaper and a children's marching drill team.

But, in our youthful militancy, we weren't patient and visionary enough in establishing long range strategies to reach our goals.

Our organizing abilities and interaction with the community at that time were incredible. But, in our youthful militancy, we weren't patient and visionary enough in establishing long range strategies to reach our goals. Consequently, in 1975/76, several comrades and I were arrested for bank robberies in our fearless attempts to expropriate monies to finance our endeavors in the movement. Overnight the feds were able to "justifiably" wreck the "peoples' organization" and incarcerate its members.

Understand that in a legitimate revolutionary struggle of a colonized people against an oppressor-colonizer, the expropriation of funds from the oppressor-colonizer is not a question of immorality. Error arises only in judgement and strategy, and oftentimes, like in any war, that is only realized in hindsight. Always remember that New Afrikans are in a state of war against the powers that be. This war was waged over 400 years ago by the enslavement of Africans in the U.S., and despite the apathetic, apolitical induced attitude of most New Afrikans today, the situation remains, worse now than even in the 1970s.

I was convicted of bank robbery in 1976 and received a 43 year sentence. I served 10 years, stayed out on parole for three, and was reincarcerated in 1988 and ordered to serve 14 more years (parole time) for allegedly conspiring to liberate Oscar López

of the FALN and Black Nationalist Kojo Bomani, from Leavenworth, USP. Presently, my presumptive parole date is 2001, and statutory release in 2009. The parole hearings were a complete sham. No evidence, other than the charges themselves and an unsigned distorted FBI report, were ever presented to substantiate the claims. I fought the issues in court with the help of two brilliant movement attorneys - Jill Soffiyah Elijah and Roger Wareham of the December 12th. The courts ended up adopting the government's last ditch argument — "please do not give a windfall victory to a clearly dangerous individual!"

I accepted Islam in prison in 1976 because I have always believed in One God. Through studying, practicing my faith and remaining active in the struggle, I've learned that genuine progress and success– personally and socially– comes through submitting to Divine Guidance from Allah. The New Afrikan Liberation struggle has lacked this in the past. This is what will restore honor, trust and dignity to our relationships, eliminate self-vested interest and racial barriers, and propel human beings in a united march to establish true freedom, justice and independence.

Not only did the FBI Counter Intelligence Program destroy revolutionary movements of the past, but our own immorality – drugs and alcohol abuse, unprincipled sexual relationships, greed, envy, arrogance and ego-tripping – took its toll too. There can be no more of that if we are to progress.

Can't Jail The Spirit! The spirit can only be free if it rides on truth, free of corruption. I openly express my commitment to the struggle, my solidarity to all PP/POWs and supporters, and my love to my wife and family.

Jihad Abdul-Mumit
January 17, 1998

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George Jackson, revolutionary prison leader, murdered at San Quentin, August 21, 1971.

JALIL ABDUL MUNTAQIM

Black Liberation Army Political Prisoner

Anthony Bottom/Jalil A. Muntaqim was born October 18, 1951, in Oakland, California, the first of four children in his family. His early years were spent in San Francisco. In his junior high school years he obtained a summer scholarship to attend an advanced high school math and science program; and while in high school he obtained a summer scholarship to attend an advanced college summer math and engineering program. During the civil rights movement, he participated in NAACP youth organizing and was one of many who engaged in street riots against racism and police brutality in San Francisco. In high school, he became a leading member of the Black Student Union. Because of his ability to articulate the issues that confronted Black students, Jalil often toured San Jose, California, in what was called "speakout" with the BSU Chairman of San Jose State and City College. He had become a member of the "House of Umoja", a cultural-nationalist affiliate of Ron Karenga's United Slaves Organization.

At the age of 16 1/2, on April 6, 1968, two nights after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., the BSU Chair of San Jose State and City College, Jalil, and a couple of high school students were arrested in a car and charged with possession of high-powered rifles and molotov cocktails. Black high school students picketed and demonstrated in front of San Jose City Hall demanding their release from detention. After the assassination of Rev. King, Jalil began to believe a more

After the assassination of Rev. King, Jalil began to believe a more militant response to national oppression and racism was necessary and began to look towards the Black Panthers for Self-Defense for leadership.

militant response to national oppression and racism was necessary and began to look towards the Black Panthers for Self-Defense for leadership. He became affiliated with the BPP when he was 18 years old. Having moved back to San Francisco from San Jose, Jalil was recruited into the Black underground by elementary school friends who had since become Panthers. Less than two months from his twentieth birthday, on August 28, 1971, Jalil was captured along with Albert Nuh Washington in a midnight shoot-out with San Francisco police. (It has been alleged that Jalil and Nuh attempted to asassinate a S.F. police sergeant in retaliation for the August 21, 1971 assassination of George Jackson.) Subsequently, Jalil was charged with a host of revolutionary underground activities, including the assassination of NYC police officers for which he is currently serving a life sentence. When he was arrested in 1971, he was a high school graduate and employed as a social worker for the California State Employment Office. Having been imprisoned since 1971, Nuh and Jalil are two of the ten longest held Black political prisoners in the world.

JERICHO
98
THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR
AMNESTY AND FREEDOM FOR ALL U.S.
POLITICAL PRISONERS AND POWS!
Woodcut: Laura Whitehorn, Political Prisoner -- Flyer design: FireWorx

While imprisoned in San Quentin in 1975-1977, Jalil was able to organize the first national prison petition campaign to the United Nations. He established the first revolutionary prisoners' national newspaper called "Armed the Spirit," and organized the first Black Au-

gust demonstration in front of San Quentin. From his prison cell, Jalil, with the support of Sundiata Acoli, organized the first march to the United Nations calling for recognition of U.S. political prisoners, as well as the first demonstration in front of the Harlem State Office Building calling for recognition of U.S. political prisoners. Also, since being in New York State prisons, Jalil wrote and submitted a legislative bill for prisoners with life sentences to receive good time off their minimum sentences. This bill was introduced to the New York State Assembly Committee on Corrections. Jalil has filed numerous lawsuits on behalf of prisoners' civil and human rights challenging the prison system's way of doing business. In addition, he has received awards of appreciation from Jaycee's, NAACP, and Project Build prison chapters for his active participation and leadership.

After many years of being denied the opportunity to attend college because he has been designated a Central Monitoring Case (CMC) security classification, in 1994 Jalil graduated from SUNY-New Paltz with a BS in Psychology and a BA in Sociology. He is a founding member of the New Afrikan Liberation Front (NALF), and presently working to develop a National Prisoners Afrikan Studies Project (NPASP). Over the years he has written several political booklets and essays, an unpublished novel and teleplay.

Jalil has a daughter and a granddaughter, he states: "I came to prison an expectant father and will leave prison a grandfather." Jalil will not appear before the parole board in New York State until the year 2002. Jalil also states: "The United States does not recognize the existence of political prisoners. To do so would give credence to the fact of the level of repression and oppression, and have to recognize the fact that people resist racist oppression in the United States, and therefore, legitimize the existence of not only the individuals who are incarcerated or have been captured, but also legitimize those movements of which they are a part."

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ATTICA MEANS FIGHT BACK!

SEKOU MGOBOGI ABDULLAH ODINGA

New Afrikan Prisoner of War

My name is Sekou Mgobogi Abdullah Odinga. I am a Muslim and a POW. I was born in Queens, N.Y., on June 17, 1944. I was raised in a family of nine—Father, Mother, three brothers, and three sisters. I was kicked out of school in the tenth grade for defending myself against an attack by a teacher.

At age 16 I was busted for robbery and sentenced to three years as a "Youthful Offender." I spent 32 months at Great Meadows Correctional Institution (Comstock) in upstate New York, where I finished my high school education. In 1961–63 Comstock was very racist. No Blacks worked in any capacity at the prison. One of the sergeants working at Comstock was the head of the KKK. My first political education came at Comstock. In 1963, I was caught in a serious race riot at Comstock. The teachings of Malcolm X, who was then with the Nation of Islam, became a big influence on me at that time. After my release, I became involved in Black political activity in New York, especially revolutionary, nationalist politics.

In 1964, I also became involved in the Cultural Nationalist movement. By 1965, I had joined the organization of African American Unity, founded by El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz (Malcolm X). I began to move with and among many young African Nationalists. My political consciousness was growing daily. I was reading and listening to many Afrikan Nationalists from Africa and the U.S. and became convinced that only after a successful armed struggle would New Afrikans gain freedom and self-de-

By 1965, I had joined the organization of African American Unity, founded by El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz (Malcolm X).

termination. I also became convinced that integration would never solve the problems faced by New Afrikans.

After Malcolm's death, the OAAU never seemed to me to be going in the direction I desired. By late '65 or early '66 I hooked up with other young Revolutionary Nationalists to organize ourselves for the purpose of implementing what we felt was Malcolm's program. We organized the Grassroot Advisory Council, in South Jamaica, New York. We were all very young and inexperienced and got caught up in a local anti-poverty program.

By 1967 I was thoroughly disillusioned with that, when I heard about the Black Panther Party (BPP) in Oakland, California. Myself, along with some of my closest comrades, decided this was the type of organization we wanted to be a part of. We decided that some of us would go to California, investigate, and join the BPP if it was what it claimed to be.

By the spring of 1968, we heard that representatives from the BPP were coming to New York and there was a possibility of organizing a chapter. I attended the meeting and decided to join and help build the BPP in New York. I became the section leader of the Bronx section, sharing an office with the Harlem section.

On January 17, 1969, the day Bunchy Carter and John Huggins were murdered in Los Angeles, I went underground. I was told that Joan Bird, a sister in the party, had been busted and severely brutalized by the police and that the police were looking for me in connection with a police shooting.

On April 22, 1969, I awoke at 5:30 AM to the sound of wood splitting around my door. When I investigated, I found that my house was completely surrounded with pigs on my roof, fire escape, in the halls, on the street, etc. I was fortunate enough to evade them and go deeper into hiding. In 1970, I was asked to go to Algeria to help set up the International section of the BPP. After the split in the Party, caused by the COINTELPRO program, I decided to come back to the U.S. to continue the struggle.

I continued to work until my capture in October of 1981. I was charged with six counts of attempted murder of police, for shooting over my shoulder while being chased and shot at by police. I was also charged with nine predicate acts of a RICO indictment. I was convicted of the attempted murders and given twenty-five years-to-life for it. I was convicted of two counts of the RICO indictment (the liberation of Assata Shakur and expropriation of an armored truck) and

On April 22, 1969, I awoke at 5:30 AM to the sound of wood splitting around my door. When I investigated, I found that my house was completely surrounded with pigs on my roof, fire escape, in the halls, on the street, etc.

given twenty years and $25,000 fine for each RICO charge. All sentences run consecutively.

Directly from court I was sent to the Federal Penitentiary at Marion, Illinois. After 3 years, I was sent to Leavenworth, where I am now being held. The pig judge recommended that I never be given parole.

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Mutulu Shakur is a 37-year-old Doctor of Acupuncture. Dr. Shakur is also a deeply committed New Afrikan (Black) community political activist who has taken part for years in the struggles for the liberation and development of New Afrikan (Black) people in America.

Shakur's political and social consciousness began to develop early in his life.

MUTULU SHAKUR

New Afrikan Political Prisoner

His mother suffered not only from being Black and female, but she was also blind. It was Shakur's first confrontation with the state. The experience of helping his mother negotiate the social service system made him realize that the system does not operate in the interests of Black people and that Black people must control the institutions that affect their lives.

It is not surprising then that one of the first struggles in which he became involved was Ocean Hill–Brownsville in Brooklyn, where Black parents were struggling to control their children's educational destiny. His participation was also based on his own experiences in the New York public school system. "I was involved because I had been miseducated, abused, and disrespected," said Shakur. "Ocean Hill–Brownsville was similar to the struggle in Soweto in 1976 in which the people struggled against the system of Bantu education."

As an acupuncturist and health-care worker, Shakur worked from 1971 to 1978 for the Lincoln Hospital Detoxification Program in the Bronx, New York. From 1978 to 1982, Dr. Shakur was the Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Black Acupuncture Advisory Association of North America (BAAANA) and the Harlem Institute of Acupuncture. At Lincoln, Dr. Shakur led a program which used acupuncture to assist in the detoxification of thousands of drug addicts. The Lincoln Detox

His participation was also based on his own experiences in the New York public school system. "I was involved because I had been miseducated, abused, and disrespected..."

Program was recognized as the largest and most effective of its kind by the National Institute of Drug Abuse, National Acupuncture Research Society, and the World Academic Society of Acupuncture.

At BAAANA, Dr. Shakur continued his remarkable work against drug addiction. He also treated and/or supervised the treatment of thousands of elderly and poor patients who otherwise would have received no treatment of this kind. Patients were able to receive quality health care at reasonable prices. Moreover, the clinic at BAAANA served on a regular basis many community leaders, political activists, lawyers, doctors, and various international dignitaries. At BAAANA, Dr. Shakur and his fellow cofounder, Dr. Richard Delaney, trained over one hundred students in the medical science of acupuncture. The training was accomplished through the BAAANA affiliate called the Harlem Institute of Acupuncture. Some of the trainees at the Harlem Institute of Acupuncture were already medical doctors, licensed by various states in the United States.

In the late 1970s Dr. Shakur traveled with Dr. Mario Wexu, Director of Education at the International Association of Traditional Chinese Acupuncture in Montreal, to the People's Republic of China, where he observed and studied acupuncture applied as the primary form of medical care. Dr. Shakur's work in acupuncture and drug detoxification was nationally and internationally known. Dr. Shakur and his colleague, Richard Delaney, by invitation attended and lectured on their work at many conferences.

Brother Shakur also worked with the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) in his early years. This was a Revolutionary Black Nationalist group which struggled for Black self-determination and socialist change in America.

Brother Shakur's primary work as a political activist was as a cofounder, leader, worker, and security personnel in the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika. The Provisional Government was founded in 1968. Its objectives were to establish an independent New Afrikan (Black) Republic in the states of Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana, the traditional Blackbelt states in the Southeastern portion of the United States of America. Although the Provisional Government's objectives were certainly viewed with disdain by the U.S. Government, various American law enforcement agencies, media giants, and whites generally, its existence has been long-standing and supported by reputable persons in the Black communities across the country. Indeed, the P.G.

Dr. Shakur's work in acupuncture and drug detoxification was nationally and internationally known.

RNA and the New Afrikan Independence Movement, of which it is a part, grow out of the various struggles of Blacks against repression in America. The Provisional Government is, in part, supported by and composed of educators, lawyers, political leaders, workers, and other reputable persons in the Black communities across America. Brother Shakur has also supported the struggles for Afrikan independence in Afrika. Indeed, he traveled to the nation of Zimbabwe in 1980 at the invitation of the Zimbabwe Afrikan National Union .

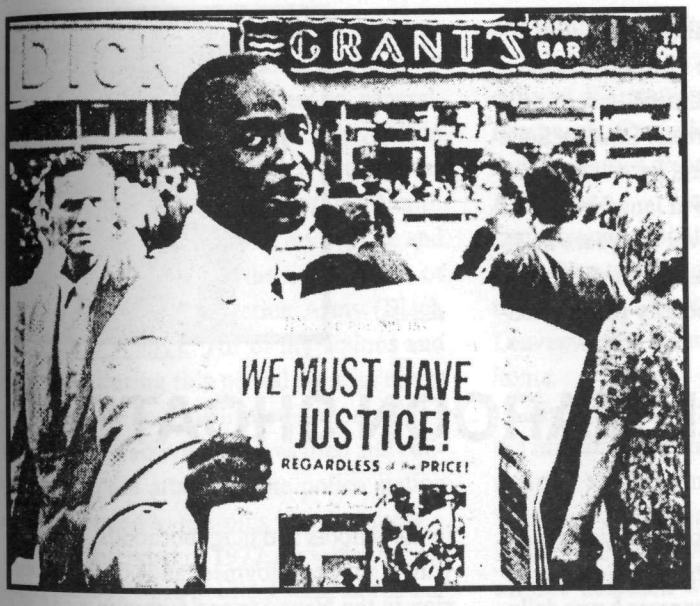
Brother Doctor Shakur has furthermore been a dedicated worker and champion in the struggle against political imprisonment and political convictions of Black activists in America. He has also been a leader in the struggle against the illegal U.S. and local American law enforcement programs designed to destroy the Black movement in America and has worked to expose and to stop the secret American war against its Black colony.

Brother Shakur served on the Committee to Defend Herman Ferguson, a leading Black political activist and educator charged in the RAM conspiracy case of the 1960s. Dr. Shakur was a member of the National Committee to Free Political Prisoners. He has worked to legally defend and support political prisoners and prisoners of war like Imari Obadele, Ph.D., and the RNA 11, Rev. Ben Chavis and the Wilmington 10, Geronimo Pratt of the Black Panther Party, Assata Shakur of the Black Liberation Army, and Sundiata Acoli of the Black Liberation Army. He contributed to the development of a petition to the United Nations by the National Conference of Black Lawyers and others. The petition is now documented in the book, *Illusions of Justice*, by Lennox S. Hinds. He has worked with the National Conference of Black Lawyers in developing defense committees for numerous political prisoners and Black prisoners of war.

Brother Shakur was most importantly a cofounder and director of the National Task Force for COINTELPRO Litigation and Research which investigated, exposed, and instigated suits against the FBI and other American law agencies for criminal acts, domestic spying, dirty tricks, repression, and counterinsurgency warfare maneuvers against the New Afrikan Independence struggle and others struggling against oppression in the U.S.

Dr. Shakur's activities in the National Liberation Movement were reported to the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation every three months.

Because of his work in the National Liberation Movement, his freedom of information files (F.O.I.A.)



expose that, from the age of 19, Dr. Shakur's activities in the National Liberation Movement were reported to the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation every three months. These reports contained language clearly indicating a nefarious set of actions against him. He believes through continuing dis-covery actions, more significant information will be exposed, revealing a classic continuation of COINTELPRO leading to his indictment in 1981.

He was charged and convicted, and was sentenced to 60 years for allegedly perpetrating conspiracy against the United States government, regarding the activities of the Black Liberation Army/New Afrikan Freedom Fighters; charges which consisted of expropriations of funds, which reportedly went to liberation movements throughout the United States and throughout the world; regarding the liberation of Prisoners of War inside the U.S. prisons, such as Assata Shakur, and the perpetuation of an underground network.

Dr. Shakur has six children, from various wonderful relationships, which he has maintained responsibility for, as well as a wife and two children who lived with him in New York until 1982. His wife now lives in Texas with their children. Dr. Shakur also has a daughter from a previous relationship who lives with her mother in Baltimore.

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RUSSELL MAROON SHOATS

My name is Russell (Maroon) Shoats and I am a New African Politicial Prisoner of War, who at this moment is serving a prison sentence at the Greene Country State Institution at Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. I was originally locked up in January of 1972 and have since spent over 25 years in 15 different state, county, and federal prisons, jails and a maximum security prison/mental institution. Over 17 of these years were spent in the "holes" of these various facilities locked down for 23 or more hours daily.

I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in August of 1943, one of 12 children in the household of Gladys and Russell Shoats.

I attended school there until the age of 15, after which I was in and out of reform schools and youth institutions until the age of 18 mainly due to gang related activities. These gang activities, though not drug related as the bulk of similar activities are today, still had the same root causes of lack of comprehensive youth oriented programs in the schools and neighborhoods, coupled with high unemployment and police repression in the New African communities.

I married twice and became the father of 7 children between the years of 1964 and 1970. During the early to middle 1960's I became increasingly politically aware and active in the New African Liberation Movement.

I was a founding member of the Black Unity Council, a Philadelphia group that eventually merged with the Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Panther Party in 1969.

In August of 1970, at the height of the nationwide repression of the New African Liberation Movement I became a fugitive after a Philadelphia policeman was killed and another was wounded in a retaliatory attack on

These gang activities, though not drug related as the bulk of similar activities are today, still had the same root causes of lack of comprehensive youth oriented programs.

a Philadelphia police station, in response to the heightened repression of the New African Liberation Movement in general, and the unjustified killing of New African youth by the repressive police in that local community. From August of 1970 until January of 1972, the date of my capture and arrest, I was active on the armed front of the New African Liberation Army (Black Liberation Army). All of my actions and activities during this period were in direct response to and in direct support of the movement's activities. I was tried and convicted for the attack on the police station and sentenced to life-plus imprisonment.

In September of 1977, myself and three other New African political prisoners of war liberated ourselves from the state prison at Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. Two of these brothers were recaptured and a third was killed during the escape. However, I remained at large for a month, in the teeth of a massive "slave style" hunt by local, state and federal forces, who had also recruited large numbers of the local rural white population to help in their search.

From my capture in October of 1977, until November of 1989, I was kept in various "holes" in numerous state, county, and federal prisons, and a maximum security prison/mental institution.

During this period I was locked down daily at the state prisons at Huntingdon, Pittsburgh, Camp Hill, Dallas, Rockview, and Graterford, Pennsylvania, as well as the Allegheny, Wayne, Washington, Lackawanna, Montgomery, and Philadelphia County Prisons and the US Penitentiaries at Lewisburgh, PA, and Leavenworth, Kansas and El Reno, Oklahoma.

In 1979, I was forceably transferred to the maximum security prison/mental institution at Waymart, PA known as "Fairview." During my over one year stay at this facility I was forceably drugged and on one occasion was hospitalized from a hospital induced overdose of these drugs.

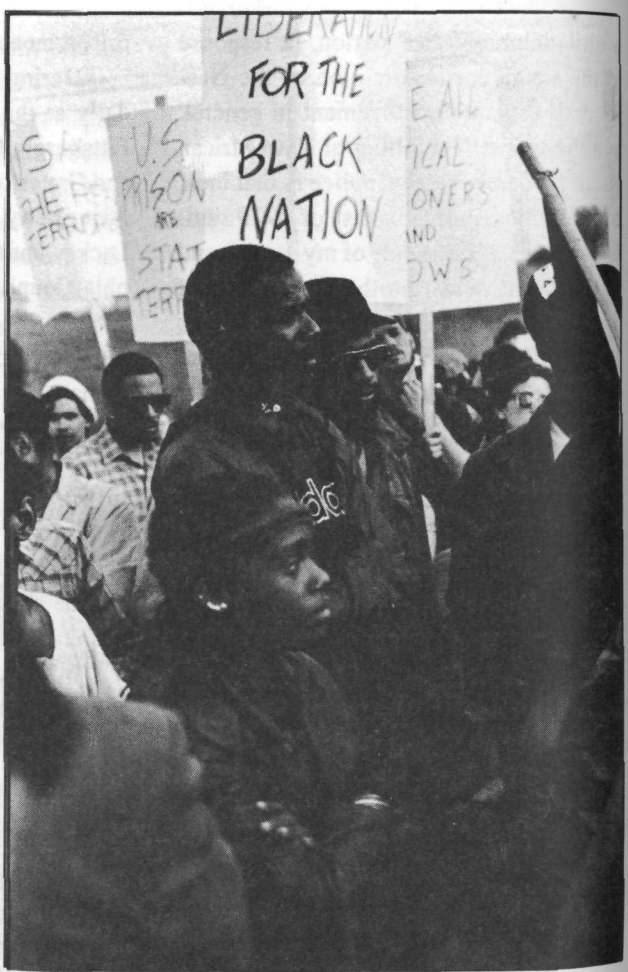
In March of 1980, myself and another New African political prisoner of war were able to liberate ourselves from this institution after a female New African activist smuggled a revolver and sub-machine gun into the institution for our use. Three days later all three of us were captured after a gun battle with local, state and county police, and FBI agents.

In the wake of the historic Camp Hill Rebellion, during October of 1989, at the State Prison at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, I was transferred from the State Prison at Dallas, Pennsylvania to the US Penitentiary at Lewisburg, PA and then to the US Peniten-

I was a founding member of the Black Unity Council, a Philadelphia group that eventually merged with the Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Panther Party in 1969.

tiary at Leavenworth, Kansas.

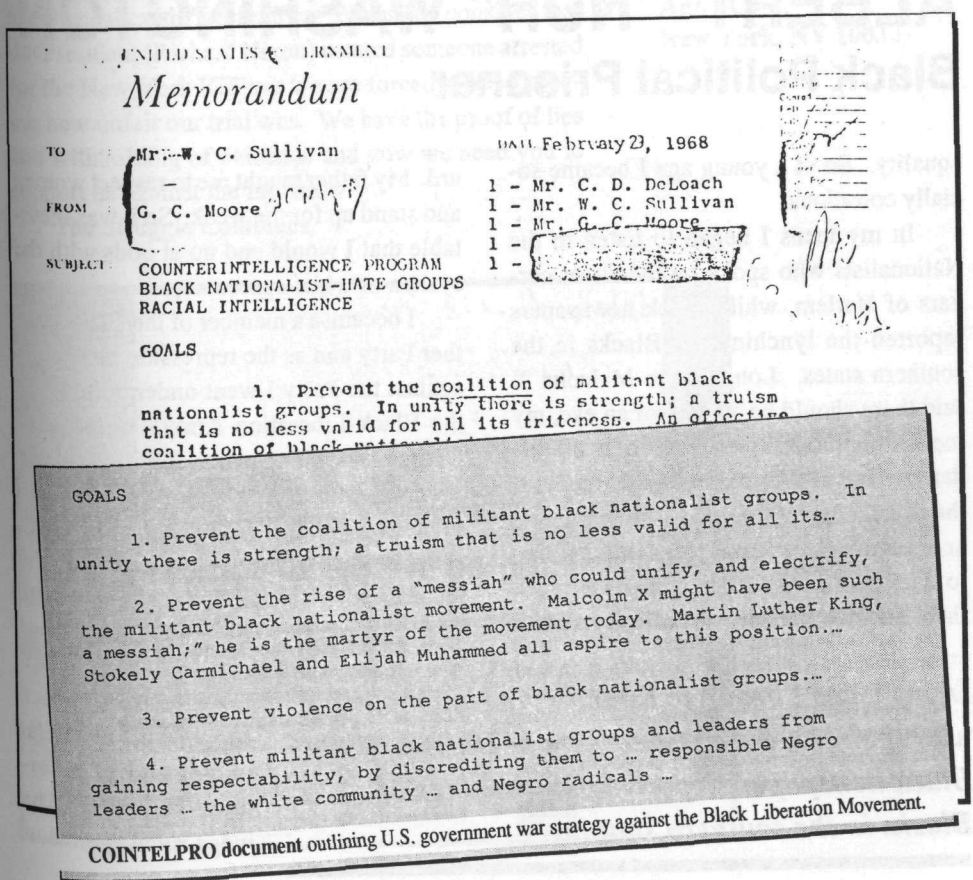
Although I had no part in this rebellion (having been at Dallas at the time), I was nevertheless singled out by the prison administration to be transferred over 1,000 miles from family, supporters, and friends with a view towards ultimately having me confined at the notorious federal prison at Marion, Illinois.



While being kept 23 hours a day on lockdown at Leavenworth, during November of 1989, my relatives and supporters mounted a campaign to lay bare, reveal the lies and falsified records the Pennsylvania prison administrators had used to implicate me in the Camp Hill rebellion, which was used as a basis for my transfer to Leavenworth and there to be evaluated for placement at Marion, Illinois.

These efforts were successful and I was finally released to the general prison population in December of 1989. I was returned to Pennsylvania in 1991. I'm now being held on 23 hour lockdown at the Waynesburg, Pennsylvania state institution in its "Control Unit" where I remain a commited New African freedom fighter, who will not rest until the New African peoples are free from oppression, and a free and self-governing nation.

Address:
Russell Maroon Shoats
AF-3855
1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy.
Waynesburg, PA 15370-8090



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

FROM : G. C. Moore

DATE: February 23, 1968

1 - Mr. C. D. DeLoach
1 - Mr. W. C. Sullivan
1 - Mr. G. C. Moore
1 -
1 -

SUBJECT: COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM
BLACK NATIONALIST-HATE GROUPS
RACIAL INTELLIGENCE

GOALS

1. Prevent the coalition of militant black nationalist groups. In unity there is strength; a truism that is no less valid for all its triteness. An effective coalition of black

GOALS

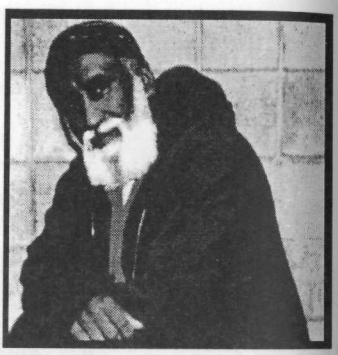
1. Prevent the coalition of militant black nationalist groups. In unity there is strength; a truism that is no less valid for all its…

2. Prevent the rise of a "messiah" who could unify, and electrify, the militant black nationalist movement. Malcolm X might have been such a messiah;" he is the martyr of the movement today. Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael and Elijah Muhammed all aspire to this position.…

3. Prevent violence on the part of black nationalist groups.…

4. Prevent militant black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability, by discrediting them to … responsible Negro leaders … the white community … and Negro radicals …

COINTELPRO document outlining U.S. government war strategy against the Black Liberation Movement.



ALBERT "NUH" WASHINGTON
Black Political Prisoner

I became exposed to Pan Africanism at an early age in the house of my grandmother who rented rooms to African and West Indian students. For the African students the subjects of independence was always at the forefront of their conversations. Words like communist and socialist were used to describe persons who wanted a government based upon social and political equality. So at a young age I became socially conscious.

In my teens I began to listen to the Nationalists who spoke on the street corners of Harlem, while Black newspapers reported the lynchings of Blacks in the southern states. Long before Malcolm X said there should be an eye for an eye, my mother impressed upon me the right of self-defense and like for like. I also learned that the psychology of the bully is to intimidate and terrorize his victims. And the best way to deal with such people is to stand up to them because the bully is basically a coward. My father taught me to respect women and stand up for the weak. So it was inevitable that I would end up at odds with the system of white supremacy.

I becamse a member of the Black Panther Party and as the repression heighened against the Party I went underground into the Black Liberation Army. The day of George Jackson's funeral, Jalil Bottom and I were captured in a shoot-out with San Francisco police. Jalil and I along with Herman Bell would be convicted for the murders of two New York City policemen. The state accomplished this by the use of perjured testimony of a few witnesses (which we showed a federal judge) and of a tortured comrade. The judge ruled against us

In my teens I began to listen to the Nationalists who spoke on the street corners of Harlem, while Black newspapers reported the lynchings of Blacks in the southern states.

and said that while the police lied and the D.A. withheld a favorable ballistic report, that the state had all the evidence destroyed when we became aware of this report, it was not enough to overturn the conviction because of other evidence. The fact we showed a couple of other witnesses lied was ignored because the state didn't have an opportunity to rule on it. We have been forced to go back into state court after twenty-six years. Now we are back before the judge who withheld much of the favorable evidence and who told our former lawyers they shouldn't defend us. When you consider that the President (Richard Nixon) wanted someone arrested for the New York Killings we are forced to keep proving how unfair our trial was. We have the proof of lies and withholding of evidence and now we need you to support us against the injustice.

The Struggle Continues.

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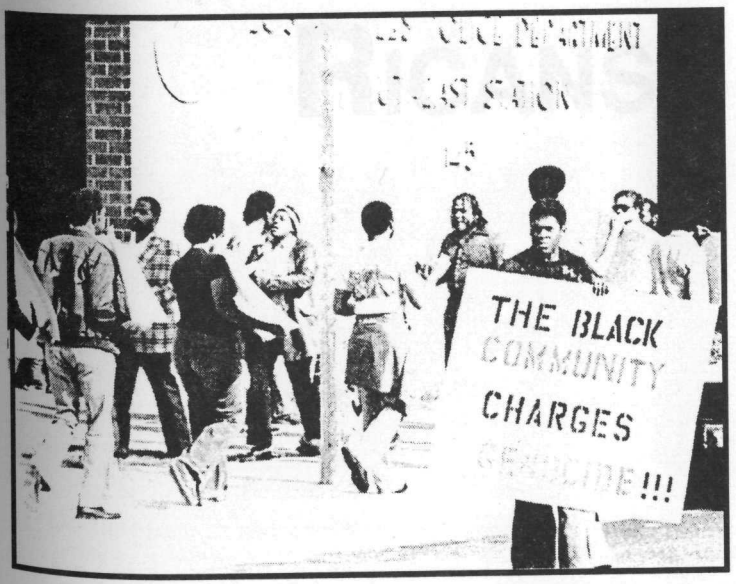


PUERTO RICANS

September 1979: Puerto Rican nationalists Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores Rodriguez, Lolita Lebron and Oscar Collazo celebrating their release from prison with a salute at St. Paul's Church.

EDWIN CORTES

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

Edwin Cortes was born in Chicago, Illinois, on March 27, 1955. He is one of 15 children. Edwin is married to his compañera Alva and together they have two children, Noemi, 20 years old, and Carlos Alberto, 18 years old.

In 1973, Edwin became involved in the formation of the Latinos/Unidos, a high school student organization which advocated a Latin American Studies curriculum as well as cultural programs. During the commencement ceremony in 1974, Edwin denounced the administration's racist practices towards the Latin American student body and the United States occupation of Puerto Rico. This experience led to a transformation in Edwin's life and the beginning of his social and political activism.

Edwin continued with his rebellious spirit upon entering the University of Illinois, Chicago Campus, in 1974. He arrived at the university in the midst of the struggle for a Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services Program (LARES) which was successful and still exists today. He also was a founding member of the Union for Puerto Rican Students, an organization which promoted the history and culture of Puerto Rico, and organized support for Puerto Rican independence. In order to help retain Latin American students in the university a struggle for a Latin American cultural center was initiated and was victorious in September 1976. The center was named after Rafael Cintron Ortiz, a Puerto Rican professor and independence leader assasinated in Chicago. The center provides forums on culture, theater, poetry, etc. It still exists today. As a student leader, he participated in struggles in support of the Iranian, Palestinian, Eritrean, and Mexican peoples.

During his trial, he put up a stoic and energetic defense of his right under international law to adopt the Prisoner of War posture. . .

Edwin was also involved in community struggles, particularly on the south side of Chicago, where he was born and raised. He helped form the Don Pedro Albizu Campos Collective, a group of independence activists who organized community and youth programs. The *collectiva* subsequently merged with another Puerto Rican organization to form the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional-Puertorriqueño (MLN-PR).

Edwin's dedication and commitment to human rights, social change, and national independence led him to become a participant in the political/military struggle for Puerto Rico's independence.

On June 29, 1983, Edwin was captured and accused of membership in the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN) as well as being charged with seditious conspiracy to oppose United States colonial domination in order to obtain the independence of Puerto Rico. During his trial, he put up a stoic and energetic defense of his right under international law to adopt the Prisoner of War posture, exposing the US's history of occupation, repression and militarism in his homeland and denouncing the judicial charade. In August 1993, Edwin was arbitrarily transferred to USP Leavenworth, Kansas. On Feb 14, 1994, Edwin was transfered to USP Terre Haute, Indiana, which allowed him to be closer to his wife and two children. After 100 months of separation, Edwin began to build a stronger relationship with family and friends in Chicago, Illinois. Edwin was transferred back to USP Lewisburg, Pennsylvania where he spent three weeks in solitary confinement. He is currently serving a 35-year-sentence at the United States Penitentiary, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

The violations of Edwin's human rights began when he was captured and held incommunicado for the first 10½ months of his pretrial detention. He was locked up for 23 hours each day, denied all human contact, and limited telephone use. His wife and children were allowed to visit him for only one hour per week and always in the presence of two armed guards.

On February 19, 1984, Edwin complained of severe abdominal pains; the physician prescribed medicine without examining him. Edwin's pain became acute and he was eventually taken to Mercy Hospital where he was chained to the bed and under 24-hour guard. Edwin was informed that his appendix must be removed but he refused surgery since he had been denied a second opinion.

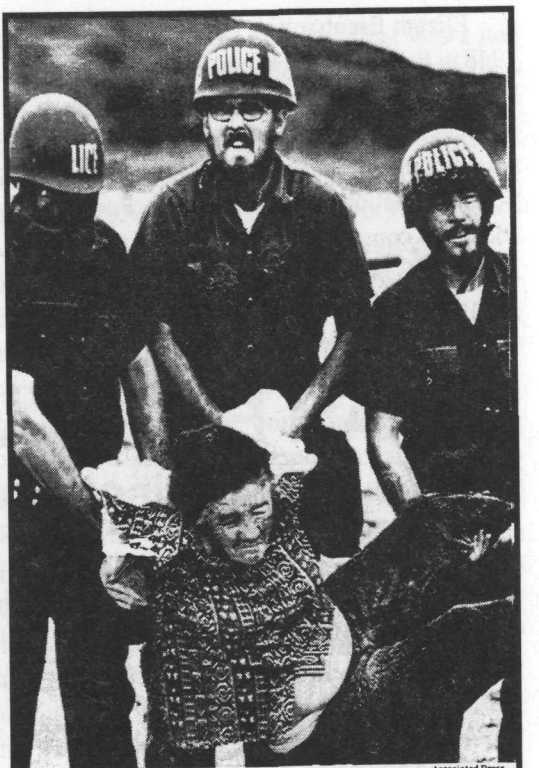
On February 20, 1984, he was taken off

The violations of Edwin's human rights began when he was captured and held incommunicado for the first 10½ months of his pretrial detention.

the intravenous feeding and told he would remain under observation for a period of 24 hours. One hour later, U.S. marshals, not bothering to consult a doctor, removed him from the hospital and transferred him back to an isolation cell at the MCC. He was denied medical attention as well as a special diet. On April 20, 1984, two guards attempted to break his arm. As a result of this struggle, Edwin suffered several contusions on his arm.

Since 1989, while at the Lewisburg federal prison, Edwin has complained of pain in his left ankle. He has seen the podiatrist and prosthetist on several occasions but to no avail. Edwin is also forced to visit with his handicapped brother Julio, handcuffed and shackled. The visits are held in a small storage room, limited to two hours, and held in the presence of two guards.

Edwin's revolutionary spirit and presence in the independence movement is felt through his writing, ceramics, and input into ongoing struggles and discussions. Edwin also participates in various vocational and educational programs in the prison. He is also involved in various inmate organizations and ad hoc committees which provide an outlet for educational, social, and cultural programs. Edwin has been steadfast in his dedication to human rights, independence, and socialism.



Associated Press

Navy security personnel removing Isabel Rodriguez, 76, from federally owned beach at Vieques, P.R., during protest against naval maneuvers.

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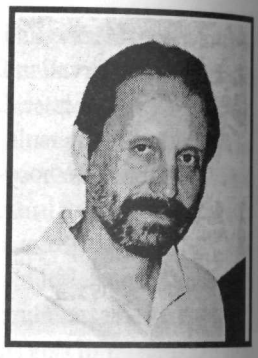
Outside Contact:
National Committee to
Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War
& Political Prisoners
2607 West Division
Chicago, IL 60622



ELIZAM ESCOBAR
Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

Elizam Escobar was born on May 24, 1948 in Ponce, Puerto Rico. Since the 60's he has been active in the struggle for independence, first in the student and anti-draft/war movement; then in the struggle for national liberation and socialism in Puerto Rico. He comes from a family with a long history of anti-colonial resistance. His grand-uncle, Eliphaz Escobar, and his uncle, Arturo Ortiz, were both members of the revolutionary Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico. Eliphaz was present at the Ponce Massacre and spent long years in prison. Arturo was the first Nationalist to fall in the October uprising of 1950.

In the early 70's, Elizam graduated from the University of Puerto Rico with a degree in Fine Arts. Then he moved to New York City. There he continued his studies on art and education at City College, Museo del Barrio and the Art Students League. He worked as a public school teacher in Puerto Rico and New York City. From 1979 to 1980, he taught at the former Art School of El Museo del Barrio and worked as a visual artist in different community schools and projects through the Association of Hispanic Arts.

In his university days, his membership in the Puerto Rican Socialist League, under the leadership of poet and marxist revolutionary Juan Antonio Corretjer, constituted one of his first major influences on his political thinking and the role of the artist in our times. This is evident, as writer Jay Murphy noted in Art News: "In Escobar's work one can find a kind of concrete embodiment of what Jameson terms 'the figure for

...as writer Jay Murphy noted in Art News: "In Escobar's work one can find a kind of concrete embodiment of what Jameson terms 'the figure for Utopia in general, and for the systemic revolutionary transformation of society as a whole.'"

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In the New York of the early 70's, he thought that the struggle for socialism in the U.S. was the best way to fight for the independence and socialism of Puerto Rico, but after years of militancy in the Progressive Labor Party, he resigned because of political differences. It was then, when the reemergence of the armed clandestine movement created new conditions for the advancement of the national liberation struggle, that he incorporated himself into it.

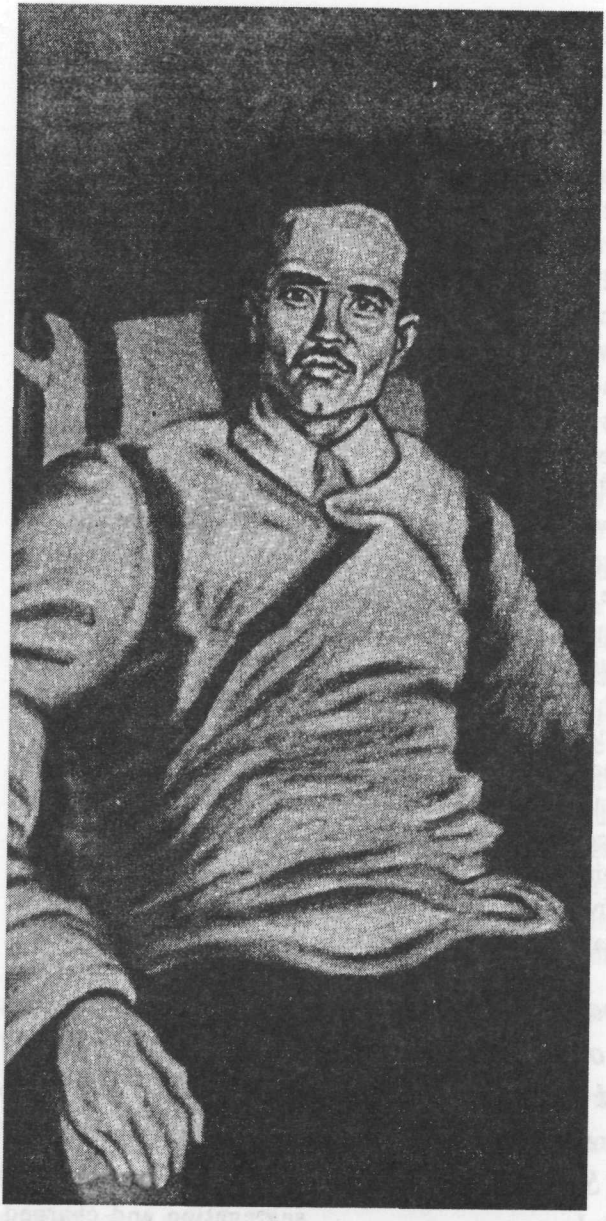
On April 4, 1980, when he was captured together with ten other comrades accused of being members of the FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation), they took a collective position as prisoners of war and refused to participate in both state and federal trials. They accused the U.S. of the crime of colonialism and of violating international law — flaunting the United Nations condemnation of colonialism and refusing to treat anti-colonial fighters according to the Geneva Convention. Since then, he and his comrades have been criminalized for their political views and willingness to fight for their country's freedom.

His total sentence is 68 years for seditious conspiracy— conspiring to overthrow the government of the U.S. (in Puerto Rico) and related charges. His release date is for the year 2014.

His son, Elizer, who was 5 years old at the time of his arrest, lives in New York City. Today, he is 23 and graduated last year from New York State University at Purchase with a degree in musical composition. His mother, Deadina Ortiz-Escobar, resides in Puerto Rico and continues to be, at 75, an active member of the campaign for the excarceration of Puerto Rican political prisoners and prisoners of war. His father, Eliphelet, died June 7, 1991, and was also throughout his life a pro-independence activist and, from the beginning, a member of the excarceration campaign in Puerto Rico. Although the community, including the mayor of the town where his family lives, high level officials, human rights groups and Congressional representatives from the U.S. and Puerto Rico asked federal authorities to allow him to see his father before he died or to attend the funeral, the Bureau of Prisons rejected their pleas.

Last 4th of July, 1997, he was punished and put in segregation and charged with "engaging in or encour-

Elizam has continued to paint and write from prison. His writings on art and politics, and his poetry and essays, have been published in magazines in Puerto Rico, Latin America, the United States, Canada, England, Germany, and Italy.



A painting of Don Pedro Albizu Campos by Elizam Escobar

aging group demonstration" and "inappropriate use of the telephone" related to an interview he gave to the EFE press and a message he read through the phone to a rally taking place in Puerto Rico demanding the unconditional release of the political prisoners, and condemning the U.S. hypocrisy of celebrating their Independence Day in Puerto Rico while negating it to Puerto Ricans. After 18 long years in U.S. state and federal prisons, his voice has not been silenced and he believes more than ever in the necessity for his country to truly exercise its right to self-determination and independence in order for the Puerto Rican people to have the power to decide their own destiny and radically deal with the socio-economic problems and spiritual demoralization caused mainly by an obsolete and absurd colonial-capitalist system.

Elizam has continued to paint and write from prison. His writings on art and politics, and his poetry and essays, have been published in magazines in Puerto Rico, Latin America, the United States, Canada, England, Germany, and Italy. He is an

Associate Editor with the cultural-political magazine Left Curve, published in Oakland, California. His art work has been exhibited in Latin America, the U.S., Canada and Europe. At present he is part of a collective exhibition of Iberoamerican artists that began on October, 1997 in Madrid, Spain, and will travel all over Latin America ending back in Paris, France in the year 2000. During this symbolically and politically crucial year of 1998— a 100 years of U.S. colonial domination over Puerto Rico— he will be participating in various art exhibitions and projects in the U.S., Puerto Rico and other places.

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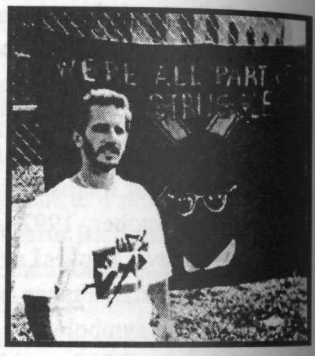
Chicago, IL 60647

National Committee to Free
Puerto Rican Prisoners of War &
Political Prisoners
2607 West Division
Chicago, IL 60622

Don Juan Antonio Corretjer & Dona Consuelo Lee Tapia de Corretjer. Behind them, Raphael Cancel Miranda.



RICARDO JIMENEZ

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

"La Patria es valor y sacrifico" by Pedro Albizu Campos — author of these most famous words and the Nationalist movement he represented, was the Puerto Rican historical person that inspired me to investigate who I was as a Puerto Rican.

Living all my life in the Puerto Rican ghettoes of Chicago, confronting racism, discrimination in housing, jobs, and education led me to the conclusion that I was different. Lacking the knowledge of my history, but raised in an authentic, traditional Puerto Rican culture, family, and environment further stimulated my curiosity. Thus, I commenced while in high school, at the age of 14, my search for my identity, and by the age of 16 I had dedicated my life to the independence of my beloved country, Puerto Rico. I never knew any other life, other than that of Puerto Rican ghettoes of Chicago, Illinois — where I arrived thirty days after my birth in San Sebastián, Puerto Rico, on April 3, 1956. I grew up in Chicago, attended Lowell Elementary School and then went on to Tuley High School (today Roberto Clemente Community Academy High School).

It was the experience and awareness at Tuley High School that forged my political development and interest in the struggles of the community, *i.e.,* police brutality, better housing and education. I participated in a leadership role in community demonstrations and boycotts at Tuley High School to demand Puerto Rican history, Latin American studies, and a staff and principal sensitive to the needs of the Puerto Rican community, considering that the school population was over 75% Puerto Rican. Due to my student leadership, I engaged with other students to stimulate interest in developing an alternative high

I commenced while in high school, at the age of 14, my search for my identity, and by the age of 16 I had dedicated my life to the independence of my beloved country, Puerto Rico.

school, independent of the Chicago Public School system. Becoming a reality in 1972, it is now a community monument of success after 20 years of existence and is better known as the Puerto Rican High School Don Pedro Albizu Campos.

I graduated from Tuley High School in June 1974 in the top 15 of my class, Vice President of the Senior Class, member of the National Honor Society, among other achievements. I went on to attend Loyola University, where I enrolled for my prerequisite courses in order to attend a College of Pharmacy to become a pharmacist. My fascination in pharmacy was developed first, by the fact that it was a medical field which always impressed me; second was that during my high school years my job was always in the pharmacy, and third, after enrolling in the university I became an apprentice pharmacist; mastered the occupation of pharmacy due to working for many years at Walgreens Pharmacy. I began to lose interest, or the challenge was not there; I then decided to change my major and entered the Illinois Institute of Technology where I majored in Computer Science and Management.

After over 18 years of incarceration my indomitable devotion and spirit to the Puerto Rican independence movement and unconditional solidarity to other Third World national liberation movements continues.

At the time of my capture I had decided that I had devoted so much time to pharmacy and almost finished the course load that I would combine these two fields and would seek a Bachelor in Pharmacy and a Master in Management and Computer Science. This was brought to a halt on April 4, 1980, when I was captured along with nine comrades in Evanston, Illinois.

From the moment of my capture I along with my comrades declared ourselves Puerto Rican Prisoners of War. Our political military actions were in defense of our war of liberation against United States colonialism in Puerto Rico. Thus, we did not participate in the legal proceedings and trials, but of course we were found guilty (of seditious conspiracy). I was sentenced to 98 years in prison. The judge wanted to give me the death penalty but the United States death penalty did not exist. As of today, my release date is November 2036.

Throughout my incarceration my family, friends and I have had to experience emotional distress due to the various forms of psychological modifications I have endured. During my first four years of confinement (at the Illinois Department of Corrections) the tactic was to disrupt my peace of mind by relocating me to a different prison every six months to a year. Every transfer was abrupt, without explanation, after midnight, and carried out in total secrecy. Another tac-

tic used was the intimidation of my visitors by random searches of them and their cars with dynamite-sniffing dogs and in many cases not to allow people to visit me at all. The adversities have been many. There have been many other forms of psychological adversities, but the one that left the greatest dent on me was the refusal by the United States Federal Bureau of Prisons to permit me a visit to see my dying mother prior to her death. I had not seen my mother for almost three years, and her battle with breast cancer had spread to her stomach and vital organs. Upon learning that it was a matter of time before she would die, I requested a hospital bedside visit before her death. Within an hour and a half of my request, the case manager assigned to me in the prison gave me the following answer: "Your request has been denied, and by the way don't bother to ask to attend the funeral because you are not going either." This insensitive response was given by an official of a country that calls itself the champion and defender of human rights — the United States government. My mother, Lydia Jimenez, died a month later, on June 7, 1990.

After over 18 years of incarceration my indomitable devotion and spirit to the Puerto Rican independence movement and unconditional solidarity to other Third World national liberation movements continues. The United States has tried every possible tactic to destroy our movement, but they have not been successful, and more so will not lead to defuse my dedication and commitment. I hold and shall hold steadfast and will continue until final victory and freedom.

VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE!

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Outside Contact:
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POWs & Political Prisoners
2607 West Division
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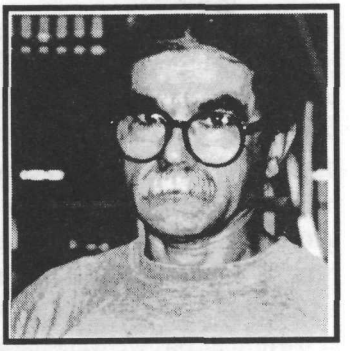

OSCAR LÓPEZ-RIVERA

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

I was born on my grandparents' farm in San Sebastián, Puerto Rico, on 6 January, 1943. By birth, I'm a jíbaro and colonized subject. I have three sisters and three brothers (one adopted). We were practically raised by our mother. From her we got love, a work ethic, spirited strength, a sense of the importance of knowledge and learning, dignity, and humility to compensate for being poor. My paternal grandfather taught me the importance of justice, love for my brethren, the land, the flora and fauna. The first 14 years of my life were spent in an environment accentuated by poverty but rich in human sensitivity and dignity. Someone was always there to give a helping hand whenever it was needed.

At age 14 I was sent to live with my sister in Chicago. My encounter with this new culture and environment was a traumatizing experience. For the first time in my life I was exposed to the ugly and detestable reality of racism. I learned that being Puerto Rican would determine where I would live, play, go to school, and even pray. From the moment I arrived in Chicago I began hearing how Puerto Ricans were blamed for the deterioration of apartments, buildings, schools, and the whole neighborhood. It was never pointed out that when we moved into an apartment it was already infested with vermin and deteriorated, the building dilapidated, and the neighborhood a slum blighted area for decades before we arrived.

I spent the first years in Chicago trying to acclimate to what I considered a hostile environment. The culture clashes and the ethnic Europeans' desires to make us invisible were very prevalent. In school I became mute (although in Puerto Rico I was outspoken and very active in the class-

The plight of the community and the experiences in Vietnam compelled me to ponder hard about the Puerto Rican reality and what role I was going to play.

room), because the teachers claimed they couldn't understand me and the students would make fun of my accent. My Puerto Rican friends and I liked the streets/the outdoors, to play our music so that others could hear it, to dress differently or "outrageously," and to have fun in order to compensate for our nostalgia and the pain of rejection.

For the cops we were the perfect victims. We were politically voiceless and ignorant of legal remedies. With us they filled their arrest quotas, got pay-off money, and the most sadistic pleasure in brutalizing us. I remember being stopped on a very cold and windy day, forced to take my coat and sweater off, and roll up my sleeves to show the cops I didn't have needle marks. It didn't matter to them that I was freezing or embarrassed because they were doing this to me in front of all my neighbors. But to the police and most ethnic Europeans we were just drug addicts, criminals, and trash that should disappear.

I dropped out after my first year in City Junior College and went to work. I worked at a variety of jobs, including at a bank, at factories, and selling insurance. In 1965, I was drafted into the Army and spent a year in Vietnam.

I came back to Chicago in 1967. I found the community devastated. The drug epidemic had reached friends and loved ones. The plight of the community and the experiences in Vietnam compelled me to ponder hard about the Puerto Rican reality and what role I was going to play. There was one positive change in the community—it wasn't allowing itself to be invisible and wasn't tolerating the police's brutal behavior. The Puerto Rican riots of 1966 had produced this awakening.

Little by little, I began to immerse myself in the community. I hooked up with other Puerto Ricans who were waging struggles around welfare rights, education, unemployment, housing, political representation, police brutality, etc. The transformation and emergence of the Young Lords added a new dimension to the struggle and gave our youth its most militant voice. I was attracted by the YLO's programmatic ideas and energies, but alienated by the absence of discipline, the drugs, and overabundance of empty rhetoric within its midst. I kept close to its periphery but at a comfortable distance from the omnipresent eye of the police. The YLO's program was the first attempt in Chicago to combine a grassroots movement in the diaspora

The founding of what is today the Pedro Albizu Campos High School and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, the fights for bilingual and bicultural education, against drugs and police brutality, ...were positive and productive endeavors.

with the struggle for Puerto Rico's self-determination.

My experiences in Vietnam had taught me that with enough determination a small country could wage a successful struggle against a big country. In my community work I tried to combine the local issues with the struggle of national identity and Puerto Rico's independence. I had come to the realization that I could best serve the community by organizing at a grassroots level, and I approached it as an art form. I never became a partisan of any political party or movement in Puerto Rico or in the diaspora. Even when I was involved with the people who founded the Chicago chapter of MPI-PSP, as soon as I realized the group's objective, I dropped out.

I believe that many of the endeavors and experiments undertaken in our attempt to organize the Puerto Rican community were productive. The founding of what is today the Pedro Albizu Campos High School and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, the fights for bilingual and bicultural

Albizu by Oscar López-Rivera

education, against drugs and police brutality, the struggles to get more Puerto Rican students in the universities and to end employment discrimination in the construction trades, Illinois Bell, Peoples Gas, and Commonwealth Edison, were positive and productive endeavors. These struggles allowed us to form alliances, especially with the Chicano/Mexicano community. And probably most significant is the fact that many of today's Puerto Rican Prisoners of War were formed or politically baptized in those struggles.

I was captured in 1981. I was sentenced to 55 years, and in 1988, I was given 15 more years. I was labeled a "terrorist" and an "incorrigible criminal." The first judge who sentenced me said that in the history books he had read about Puerto Rico, he had found that not a single shot had been fired by the US military forces in the invasion of 1898. The prosecutor said that the case against me was not because of my political beliefs but because I used violence. My beliefs then and now are that there is no greater crime than to deny a nation its freedom; that I, as a colonized subject, have never been a free man, therefore I've only had one choice—to fight for my freedom by any means necessary; and that ours is a just and noble cause to be defended in the diaspora, in Puerto Rico, and even in the "latrines of [the federal penitentiary at] Atlanta," as Don Pedro Albizu Campos used to say. To this day I continue to believe that in our quest for freedom, justice, and truth, things are to be done and not only said. Whatever small contribution or good deed I've done for our cause, it is my expression of love and legacy for my daughter Clarissa and my granddaughter Karina.

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Adolfo Matos Antongiorgi was born in Lajas, Puerto Rico, on September 18, 1950. His parents still reside in his hometown. He moved to New York City to live with his grandparents at the age of 16. In 1970 he met and married his beloved compañera Helen Rosado. Adolfo has two daughters, Rosa Maria, 27 years of age, and Lydia, who is 21 years old.

ADOLFO MATOS ANTONGIORGI

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

A telephone call to the Evanston, Illinois police in 1980 led to the capture of Adolfo Matos and eight Puerto Rican *compañeros/as*. (One of the captured became a government witness.) A neighborhood considerably middle class is no exception to the exercise of racial discrimination. According to "the caller" "some Hispanics" were seen getting in a van. When the police arrived the Puerto Ricans were having problems with the van's ignition. They were told to evacuate the vehicle. Most had disguises: wigs, beards, or mustaches. At that moment, the police reported to the base that they had some "Iranian terrorists." Then they were taken to the precinct where they met two other *compañeros* that were captured earlier. According to police records 19 weapons were seized. Adolfo's bail was set for 2 million dollars. He was tried and convicted of weapons possession in state court in Cook County and sentenced to eight years.

After his capture on April 4, 1980, he was held for 46 months in various state prisons. During this period he was transferred ten times to nine different state prisons. These transfers seem akin to kidnapping, since Adolfo was never informed beforehand. He was taken at dawn, handcuffed and chained by armed

In almost all prisons, Adolfo was placed in solitary confinement or "Administrative Detention."

prison officials on a dangerous, high speed trek across the state. He was never told of his destination and was denied permission to contact either his family or lawyer.

In almost all prisons, Adolfo was placed in solitary confinement or "Administrative Detention." He was not allowed personal property and could not communicate with other prisoners or use the telephone. He was locked down twenty-three hours a day. All of his activities were documented every half hour and kept in a log. If he was asleep, the guards would wake him up, using as a pretext the need to find out if he was still alive. This was just an excuse to harass him. Prison officials informed him that he was a high security prisoner in a low security prison. His visits, recreation, and correspondence were restricted. His visitors were made to wait hours before they could see Adolfo. In addition, visitors were the object of harassment by prison officials. Legal visits were supervised, and on many occasions, the paralegals were unable to speak to prison officials and were even forced to terminate their visits abruptly.

Adolfo is currently incarcerated in a federal penitentiary in Lompoc, California. He is serving a 70-year federal sentence for Seditious Conspiracy and other charges. This prison is located literally across the country from his family who resides in New York City and Puerto Rico. His visits are limited to his immediate family and paralegals may only visit him one at a time.

His prison counselor told him that his friends and those who supported Puerto Rican independence would be denied the right to visit, using the excuse that they did not know him before his capture. One of the elements of the "denial" system is to deny the prisoner regular (social) as well as legal visits. In addition, prison officials are constantly provoking Adolfo.

He is a skilled artisan, working with copper etchings that depict Puerto Rican and cultural figures. A permanent exhibition of his work is on display at the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago. With his optimism, his smile, and his love for his people, Adolfo is a *jíbaro terminao* in every way.

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DYLCIA PAGÁN

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

I was born on October 15, 1946 in New York City and was raised in "El Barrio" (East Harlem-NYC). Having two loving parents Delia and Sebastian, who emphasized my "Puerto Rican-ness" enabled me at an early age to feel secure about who I was in relationship to overall urban life. Being the only child in a working class family (my father was a plumber) provided certain privileges that most Puerto Rican children in my neighborhood did not experience. I attended Catholic grammar and high school and was provided with many creative outlets in music, drama and dance. At the early age of 15, I was involved in my community teaching ballet classes to younger children. With the advent of the civil rights movement, I became involved in community activism by participating in voter's registration drives and other civil rights activities.

...the unintended result of a major study clearly pointed out that the recipients of those services were not becoming self-sufficient. On the contrary, what was developing was an interdependence between agencies and the people.

The early 60's provided me the opportunity to engage in a variety of community projects which were a direct result of the anti-poverty legislation. By age 19, I was a community organizer working in housing, health and educational programs which were supposed to be the answers to the disparity of economic and social programs that our community lacked. Rent strikes, demonstrations and takeovers became an every day thing for me. At this time, I sincerely thought that the jargon "maximum feasible participation of the poor" was the means by which our communities would become self-sufficient and in turn acquire the power to effect change. In 1969, I had the opportunity to work directly

at the Community Development Agency as an evaluation assistant. I was responsible for assessing all the poverty programs in New York City's five burroughs. As part of a team, I zealously went out to see what services were being rendered to the people. It was my first awakening because the unintended result of a major study clearly pointed out that the recipients of those services were not becoming self-sufficient. On the contrary, what was developing was an interdependence between agencies and the people. The mechanisms created by the City of New York were merely paying lip service to the real problems facing our communities.

Simultaneously those of us who perceived ourselves as leaders also became involved in electoral politics. We formed independent parties and created liberal conditions to elect our own legitimate local representatives. Our financial backing was limited, yet we forged ahead to challenge the system and did get certain candidates on the ballot. Awakening number two, electoral politics were so corrupt and controlled by the regular machine that unless you were prepared to jump on their bandwagon, it was literally impossible to establish and successfully elect independent candidates.

By this time, I decided to further my education by attending college on a full-

June 1997: Puerto Rican National Heroine, Lolita Lebrón, at the United Nations

time basis. I attended Brooklyn College, majored in political science and psychology and became very active in student activities. While at Brooklyn College, I helped organize the Puerto Rican Student Union, which was a conglomeration of all the Puerto Rican Student Organizations throughout the CUNY System. The end result of this effort was the formulation of Puerto Rican Studies Departments controlled by students.

For me, college represented a means to survive, I had lost both of my parents by this time and realized that I need some form of credentials to cope in society. I taught in the New York City Educational System at the grammar school level and did a variety of consulting work in community development and arts.

During the late 1960's, New York City experienced the resurgence of organizing around the issue of Puerto Rican independence. I became actively involved and participated in demonstrations and study groups. At the community level, the Young Lords Party brought to the limelight the concept "Soy Boricua." Many community concerns were exposed and of course, Puerto Rican independence and socialism was an issue to organize around, as well as the release of the Five Puerto Rican Nationalists.

By the early 70's, I began my career as a TV producer and writer in an attempt to create positive images of our people. My field of endeavor centered around investigative documentaries and children's programs at NBC, ABC, CBS, and PBS. To attain access to the media, the Puerto Rican Media and Education Council filed a series of lawsuits against the major television stations which facilitated the local public affairs programming we have today. My journalistic capacities were also utilized as the English-Editor of a bi-lingual daily, ***El Tiempo.***

Throughout my life, I have strived for qualitative change. My work experience served as the means through which I confronted the contradictions that exist in our communities and society at large. It has been the praxis that has confirmed the necessity for socialism and revolutionary principles. In light of my many observations, I decided to join the clandestine forces for the liberation of my homeland, Puerto Rico. I have borne a son, Guillermo who has been in clandestinity since my capture on April 4, 1980. At present, I am at FCI Pleasanton, Dublin, California serving a federal sentence of 55 years for the inconceivable charge of "seditious conspiracy". I am a Puerto Rican Prisoner of War.

By the early 70's, I began my career as a TV producer and writer in an attempt to create positive images of our people.

The biggest sacrifice I have had to make is being separated from my beloved son, Guillermo. Yet I am certain that my incarceration has not been in vain because I believe in our struggle and know that Puerto Rico will one day be free and socialist. My son and all our children will participate in a more humane society, free from all the vestiges of North American imperialism.

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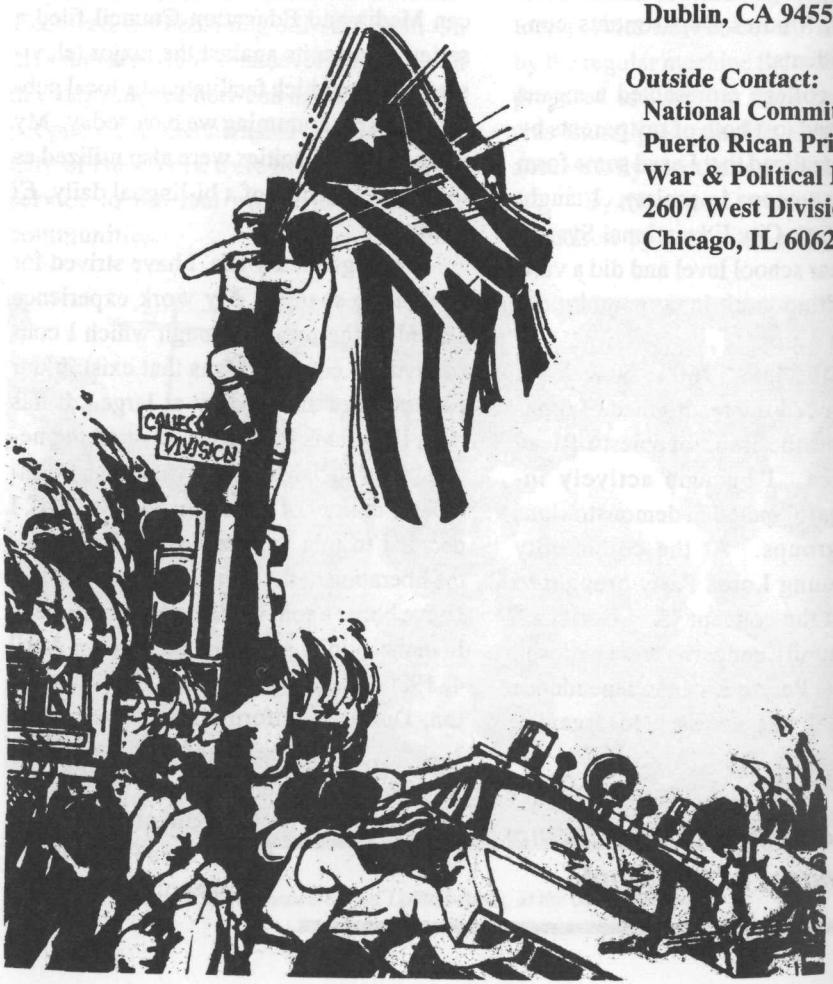

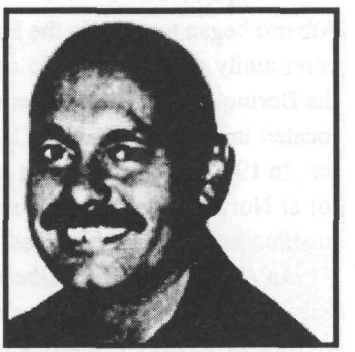

Alberto was born in the Puerto Rican community of South Bronx in 1953. Soon after his family moved to the Old Town area of Chicago. Through his parents efforts to reunite a family living in Puerto Rico and the United States along with new births, Alberto's family grew to 14. When he was 13 years old Alberto's family moved to the south side of Chicago, buying a house in "El Barrio" at 55th and Halsted.

ALBERTO RODRÍGUEZ

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

The Puerto Rican Community on the south side was small but politically active in the church and various community organizations. Alberto went to Tilden High School in the racist neighborhood known as Canaryville. It was here that Alberto confronted violent racism, police brutality, schools which did not teach and all the other ills of ghetto life. In the late 60's and early 70's the struggle of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and other oppressed people dominated life in the Barrio and Alberto was involved in all this. He became involved in struggles for Puerto Rican Studies in High School, protests against racist violence and walkouts to protest the assasination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Black Panthers and police brutality.

Upon graduation Alberto entered the University of Illinois, Chicago campus. He found conditions there against Puerto Rican students not much different than what he experienced in high school. He immediately helped organize the first Latino student activist organization at the university which raised the issues of racism in hiring, in recruitment, in allocation of funds and the general lack of democracy in the university.

While in school Alberto married and soon two children were born, Yazmin Elena and Ricardo Alberto.

Alberto began to work in the Puerto Rican community as the academic counselor of the Borinquena Extended Learning Center located in the Puerto Rican Cultural Center.

Alberto began to work in the Puerto Rican community as the academic counselor of the Borinquena Extended Learning Center located in the Puerto Rican Cultural Center. In 1980 he began to work as a counselor at Northeastern Illinois University. A position he held until his arrest in 1983.

In the community Alberto was involved in many organizations such as the Worker's Rights Center, Comite Pro-Orientacion Comunal, Committee to Stop the Grand Jury, the National Committee to Free the 5 Puerto Rican Nationalists as well as the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners which succeeded it, La Colectiva Don Pedro Albizu Campos, the Movimiento De Liberacion Nacional, the Latino Cultural Center and Teatro Guanin.

On June 29, 1983 Alberto was arrested and accused of being a member of Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (F.A.L.N.). In 1985 he was convicted of seditious conspiracy and sentenced to 35 years of prison. Since then he has been incarcerated in the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary located in Pennsylvania.

Alberto stays active in prison studying, reading, writing, playing bass guitar and working. He completed a 2 year vocational trade program in heating, air conditioning, plumbing and electrical wiring. He then completed a 5 year apprenticeship program in air conditioning and refrigeration. He now repairs music equipment for the recreation department.

After 12 years Alberto appeared before the parole board. In spite of clear conduct, excellent educational and vocational training, support of family, hundreds of friends, religious and political leaders, his parole request was denied and he was ordered to remain in prison until the completion of his full sentence.

Alberto continues to strive to maintain his political identity and his humanity in a barbaric system where racist murders are commonplace and institutional repression rises each day. In spite of a decade and a half of incarceration Alberto remains committed to a free Puerto Rico.

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ALICIA RODRÍGUEZ

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

My name is Alicia Rodríguez and I was born on October 21, 1953, to Josefina and Bernardo Rodríguez. In the latter part of 1951, my parents and maternal aunts and uncles migrated to Chicago, Illinois. I am my parents third child, yet I am the first in my clan to be born within the hallowed borders of the United States.

I come from a people who treasure family and pride themselves in being Puertorriqueños. The first five years of my life, I was nurtured on the beliefs and customs of my ancestral homeland. The boundaries of my home extended to encompass those of my extended family. As I journeyed into the institution of education, it came as a startling revelation that my sense of self began to change drastically. Language — the most natural form of communication — became a stumbling block. This inability to make myself understood and to understand others turned my sense of belonging into one of an unwelcome visitor.

Not only was racial discrimination dominant —making assimilation impossible— it drove me to question the antagonistic relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico.

In my formative years attacks were made against my nationality, my physical features, my speech patterns, and my mannerisms. I was viewed as "ugly" because I was not the acceptable blue-eyed blond. I was considered "stupid" because English was difficult to learn in an unwelcome environment. I was seen as a "foreigner" because I was the daughter of immigrants. Anger and confusion became constant companions as I fought to maintain a sense of self-worth. Latinos throughout the community found the church an outlet to express themselves and engage in traditions and customs. They generated warmth, pride, and a sense of identity which helped to cushion the alienation they suffered in their daily lives. As a young child, the expe-

riences and interaction within this community connected me firmly to my ancestral roots. I felt as one within the hispanic culture. Its rhythms, its smell, its sounds, and its familiarities are as much a part of me today as they were yesterday.

Immigrant parents rely on their children to help them bridge the gap between different cultures. This added to the struggles that marked my adolescent years. Not only was racial discrimination dominant — making assimilation impossible — it drove me to question the antagonistic relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. I felt that being Puertorriqueña was like walking around with a mark on your back. In school, if a teacher had to ration out a certain quota of A's then it was an excuse to give me a B regardless of my performance. Whether pleading with creditors not to disconnect the utilities, or a school principal to extend the tuition deadline, their refusal was based on the fact that we were "different" and less tolerated.

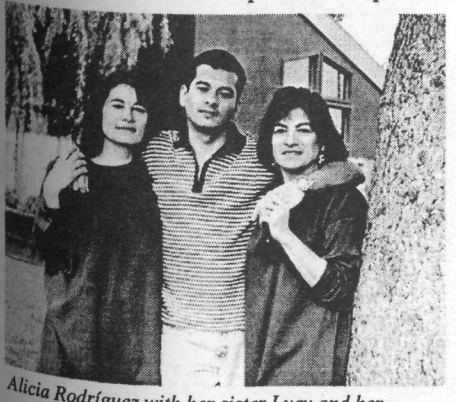
Since money was always a problem, it wasn't until I graduated from high school and started working that I managed to afford a plane ticket to Puerto Rico. This experience — a face to face encounter of past and present — was definitely a turning point. All my life I had been conjuring up images of Puerto Rico, yet, the second I stepped off the plane, I was engulfed with the certainty I had come home. The children help make up most pleasurable memories. How different life was for them on the island, as opposed to their counterparts in Chicago, New York, and elsewhere. They may have looked similar, but their eyes had a brightness; their stance had a spunkiness; and their songs and laughter were flavored with a different "sazón". While their zeal was foreign to the school and playgrounds of my past, I could still recognize the scars of a shared struggle. Despite the fact I was not a native daughter, in my heart I felt just as much a Puertorriqueña as those children. I was determined that this would be the beginning of my reunion with my homeland.

I was able to return twice. While these visits strengthened my love for Puerto Rico, as a science major my heart broke over the obvious, damaging effects that the U.S. Petrochemical and Pharmaceutical Corporations were having on the environment. Compounding my anger were the smoke stacks belching long trails of black toxic clouds along the highways. These same corporations were responsible for the oil spills along the coast and

While these visits strengthened my love for Puerto Rico, as a science major my heart broke over the obvious, damaging effects that the U.S. Petrochemical and Pharmaceutical Corporations were having on the environment.

public beaches. More alarming was the fact that Puerto Rico has no Environmental Protection Laws!

The need to fight colonialism became mine on my third and last visit to Puerto Rico. My intentions were to stay and finish my studies at the University of Mayaquez. I was told I would not receive financial aid because I was not a "resident" of Puerto Rico. Instead, I would be enrolled as a "foreign" student and expected to pay a higher tuition. This example of U.S. control over Puerto Rico's institutions sparked a change in me. It was too ironic and contradictory to accept. In reality, I was only seeking to transfer the financial assistance I was already receiving from the University of Illinois to the University of Mayaquez. Suffering discrimination on foreign soil was one thing, but to be subjected to it in my own country was intolerable. I felt as if a door had been shut in my face. The economic hardship there surpassed what I had experienced in the U.S. I could not in clear conscience remain there and expect my family to support me.



Alicia Rodríguez with her sister Lucy and her nephew Damian.

Instead, I left Puerto Rico with an unsettling feeling that did not subside until I integrated into the underground movement and discovered my life's purpose. If it was not for the political work of many organizations and movement, I would never have been exposed to the cause for which I struggle. For me, this revolutionary process was and is the only means that we as a people have to guarantee our break from colonialism. Puerto Rico's history is full of heroic men and women who sacrificed their lives to defend her dignity and passion for self-determination. With twelve years of incarceration behind me and untold numbers to come, my heart remains set and my will engaged in the continuing fight to defend against the worst international crime — COLONIALISM.

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Aerial view of the march to stop the sale of the Puerto Rican Telephone Company

150,000 participate in work stoppage on October 1, 1997 in Puerto Rico

My name is Ida Luz Rodríguez. i was born in Las Marias, Puerto Rico, on July 7, 1950. i was two years old when my family made the difficult decision to leave the homeland and emigrate to Chicago, Illinois, attempting in this way to escape the United States colonial yoke only to face other dimensions of planetary colonialism and patriarchy.

IDA LUZ RODRÍGUEZ

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

i am a woman formed by the colonial and patriarchal social structure. i have personally and profoundly experienced the dominant culture's hatred of women, of Puerto Ricans, and of poor people. Consequently, when i reached my late teens, i found it so easy to identify with the issues central to the struggles for national liberation which were developing in many parts of the world. This identification was made easy by my own personal need and desire for independence and liberation.

My active involvement in the Puerto Rican independence movement began almost twenty years ago. A few years later, on November 3, 1976, Chicago police forces discovered a safe house which belonged to the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN). In order to escape capture, i made the decision to join other comrades in clandestine struggle.

The evening of that day was imprinted in my memory. You see, i was forced to leave my three-year-old son Damian with my sister Alicia. At first, my son thought that my absence was due to my work schedule which required constant interstate travelling. But as the days stretched into weeks and months, Damian realized that i was not coming back. Damian has been my greatest sacrifice to the Puerto Rican independence process.

On April 4, 1980, i was captured along with other comrades. Immediately afterwards, we took the position of prisoners of war, turning our backs on a mock trial. i was given a consecutive state and federal sentence of 83 years for conspiracy to overthrow by force the government of the United States, creating the illusion that US control in Puerto Rico is legal and not the result of a military invasion and occupa-

tion which continues to this very day.

April 4, 1998, will mark the completion of eighteen years of our incarceration. i am going to ask you to imagine for just a moment living eighteen years in a controlled environment which sustains itself on the dehumanization of the prisoner. Now please try again to imagine a prisoner of war who must resist a distinct, constant, hostile, and deliberate form of repression clearly outlined years ago by representatives of counter-insurgency forces. Why do i ask you to use your imagination? You see, alone, i can not find the words which will remove the veneer of superficiality and disconnection which often seems to characterize written accounts of our prison conditions. Together, we need to create a thinking process which is alive and able to see the interconnections of the many and complex parts.

Without the help of your imagination, i cannot communicate to you my sense of violation each time i have to strip search, or whenever i must visit in a controlled and repressive environment. Words alone cannot accurately convey my sense of violation and frustration whenever i pick up the phone or write a letter knowing that everything i say or write is either tape-recorded or photocopied. And words alone cannot describe to you my feelings the morning i was transferred from Dwight Correctional Center leaving behind my sister POW Alicia Rodríguez. To this day, it is difficult for me to recall that separation without feeling a tugging in my heart. And most importantly, your imagination is needed to help make the profound connections between the prison conditions i've mentioned and colonialism and patriarchy as a whole. i remain firm in my commitment to the process of human liberation. Today, more than ever before, i will do what is necessary to recognize my inherent power and unite my perspective and experience with the male point of view. Together, as women and men, we need to learn to recognize and accept our deep connection to all the life processes unfolding on this biosphere we call Earth. As a Puerto Rican woman, i struggle for the liberation of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico, as a component of the whole, can play an essential role in the dismantlement of planetary colonialism and patriarchy which is destroying the Earth. i am honored to be able to contribute my efforts to such a complex, demanding, and life-promoting process.

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LUIS ROSA

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

Luis Rosa was born in Chicago, Illinois, on August 6, 1960. At the time of his capture on April 4, 1980, he was living with his mother and three younger brothers. His father died on the day of his birth. Luis has a 21-year old son by the name of Luis, Jr. Luis studied at the University of Illinois in Chicago and was president and organizer of the Union of Puerto Rican Students. He was a community activist involved in such issues as police brutality and the lack of services in the Puerto Rican community.

Before his capture, Luis was writing poetry and playing congas with a cultural group. Behind prison walls, Luis still expresses his feelings through his poetry and music. He is a regular contributor to *Libertad* and other publications. Luis was sentenced to 30 years on state charges and 75-years on federal charges, including seditious conspiracy.

Since his capture eighteen years ago, Luis has been transferred 14 different times within eight security prisons in Illinois, and was isolated nine different times. Thirty-eight photos were taken upon his arrival at Joliet Penitentiary, with the use of force, and the photos were distributed to the guards and other prison officials. Luis was forced to take another photo every month and was placed in isolation if he refused. He was also accused of a conspiracy to help other prisoners escape. False charges were filed against Luis after a guard was injured when a judge ordered Luis to be restrained.

The government's repression and hostility have not been limited to Luis alone—it extended to members of the community. His brother Félix was arrested, convicted and imprisoned on false charges. The motives behind these false arrests were to secure convictions against Puerto Rican *independentistas* charged with being members of the FALN.

The government's repression and hostility have not been limited to Luis alone—it extended to members of the community.

For six years, Félix Rosa was subjected to the same inhumane and brutal treatment.

Luis' mother and family were also under constant surveillance. On one occasion, his mother was struck by an ambulance in an accident of a "suspicious" nature, while she was on her way to see Luis. In another instance, Luis' grandfather was interrogated at gunpoint, and as a result, suffered a heart attack. In still another incident, Luis' son was almost kidnapped by a man who resembled a known FBI agent.

The purpose of these calculated and systematic acts of repression is to isolate Luis from his family, friends, and supporters in the community.

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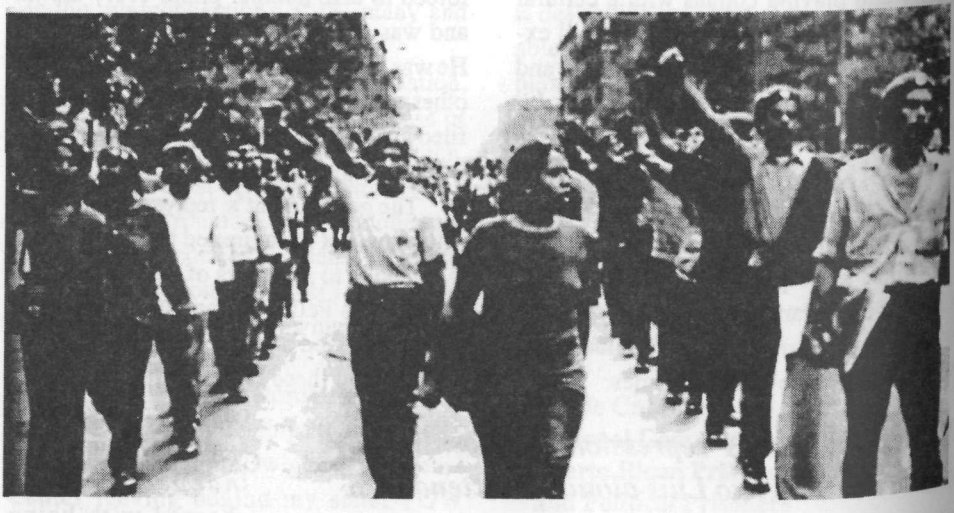
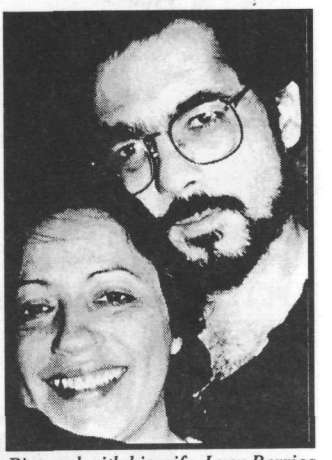


March of Young Lord activists



Pictured with his wife, Lucy Berrios

JUAN E. SEGARRA-PALMER

Puerto Rican Political Prisoner

I was born on March 6, 1950. I am the oldest of four children of middle class parents Enrique Segarra Irrizarry and Noemi Palmer Marín, who are still together after 40 years of marriage. My father is from Lares. My mother is from New York. I was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico. Both sides of my family resisted Spanish colonialism—my father's side was involved in the Grito de Lares and was repressed during the "Componte;" my mother's side Ramon, Wenzeslao, and Pachín Marín died fighting in Cuba for the independence of Puerto Rico and Cuba under the command of the Maceo brothers. From my father I learned to love Puerto Rico and from my mother I learned to love my neighbor and to love justice.

I attended elite schools in the United States: Phillips Academy and Harvard University, 1964-72. From 1972 to 1976 when I returned to Puerto Rico I worked as a machinist and building superintendent.

The Vietnam War, travel to Mexico, and living in New York City awakened my political consciousness.

The Vietnam War, travel to Mexico, and living in New York City awakened my political consciousness. Since 1970 I have devoted myself to the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico, participating with the Young Lords, PSP, PIP and the Macheteros in different facets of our people's struggle—the Campaign to Free the Nationalists, defense of worker's rights and union democracy, squatters, and the struggle in defense of Vieques and against the presence of nuclear weapons.

I am serving a 55-year sentence for my participation in taking $7.1 million from the Wells Fargo depot in Hartford, CT. in order to help finance the struggle for independence.

Can't Jail the Spirit

I am married to the love of my life, Lucy Berríos, and I am the father of five children, Wandy, Luriza, Amilcar, Ramon, and Zulena (who was born in prison).

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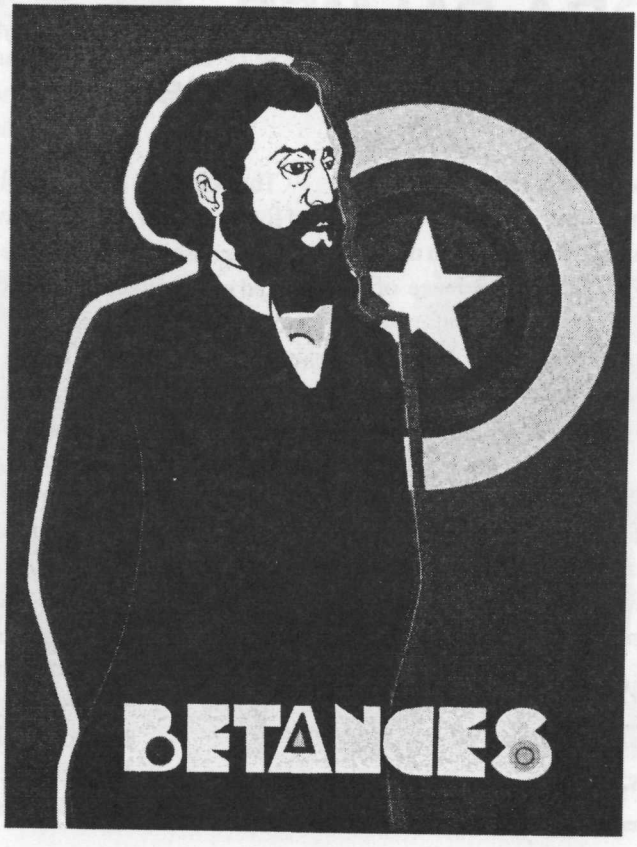

ALEJANDRINA TORRES

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

Alejandrina Torres was born in San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico, on June 18, 1939, the ninth daughter of ten children. When she was eleven years old, she and her family migrated to New York where she graduated from high school. In 1963, she moved to Chicago, and one year later married the Reverend José Torres, a community activist and Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Chicago. Together they raised the Reverend Torres' three children from a previous marriage, Carlos Alberto, Norma, and Nidza Margarita, as well as two daughters of their own, Liza Beth and Catalina.

Throughout the 1960's, Alejandrina was a leader in her community, first as a founding member and later a teacher at the Rafael Cancel Miranda Puerto Rican High School, now known as the Pedro Albizu Campos High School. She later helped found the Betances Clinic, and served as secretary of the First Congregational Church of Chicago, where she organized a variety of community programs. She also participated in the Committee to Free the Five Nationalists, eventually becoming an active member of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War.

After her capture in 1983, Alejandrina was placed in administrative detention, segregated from the general population in an all-male unit. She was incarcerated 24-hours per day and forced to endure the explicitly vulgar sexual taunting of the male prisoners and guards. On one occasion, a prisoner stood before her cell completely naked. When she complained to the guard on duty, he laughed at her and told her the men were free to do as they pleased on their unit.

She was incarcerated 24-hours per day and forced to endure the explicitly vulgar sexual taunting of the male prisoners and guards.

Alejandrina suffered a heart attack due to the daily trauma of her environment, the lack of fresh air, and her total isolation.

Although Alejandrina suffers from a condition called Left Bundle Branch Block and Mitral Valve Prolapse, she was denied proper medical care.

She was prohibited from using both legal and regular libraries and was prevented from participating in social or educational programs. Alejandrina was not permitted to participate in recreational activities in the gymnasium or to attend religious services.

She was allowed to visit only one hour weekly with her husband or children. Visiting hours began at 8:00 a.m. Saturday mornings. If for any reason her visitors arrived late, the visit was denied. Visits were held in the presence of a guard who took notes during the conversations. Family visits with relatives other than her husband or daughters had to be approved as "special visits," and supporters and friends were denied visits altogether. In other words, the same restrictions which were applied in segregation were applied to Alejandrina while she was in general population.

On June 22, 1984, Alejandrina experienced a brutal physical assault. After a visit from her daughter, Alejandrina was ordered to submit to a strip search, which she did not refuse. Upon dressing after the search, she was ordered to strip again for a second search. When she protested this harassment, a male officer accused her of disobeying orders. Alejandrina consented to the second strip search on the condition that it be executed by female guards. The officer did not permit this, and he forced her down onto her knees, hands held behind her back, head pushed between his legs. He directed four female guards to undress her and conduct the strip search, during which time they beat her.

These abuses constitute a vicious violation of Alejandrina's human rights. She was transferred from the Lexington Control Unit, in the federal prison in Lexington, Kentucky where she faced continued physical and psychological torture designed to break her spirit and health. She was under 24-hour surveillance, even while bathing and had extremely limited visiting rights. Alejandrina suffered from sensory deprivation due to the isolation of the Control Unit, which is located in the sub-basement of a building separate from the rest of the prison. She was allowed only two ten-minute personal phone calls per week. Her mail was censored and all political correspondence was returned.

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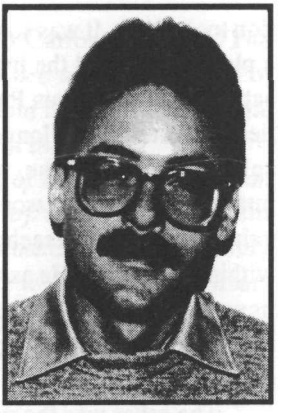

Carlos Alberto Torres was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico in 1952. He attended elementary schools in Carolina, Puerto Rico, Manhattan, New York and Oak Park, Illinois. He went on to study and graduate from Oak Park-River Forest High School. In his junior year of high school Carlos participated in his first Puerto Rican History class offered by Aspira in Chicago, Illinois.

CARLOS ALBERTO TORRES

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

After the first class he remembers feeling much pride and interest in the history of his people, their culture and political tendencies. Later he became a student at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale where he majored in Sociology and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Despite the fact that Carlos spent most of his life in the U.S., he never was separated from his culture, therefore never inserting himself in mainstream America. As he has stated, *"I have always felt a very strong connection with Puerto Rico."* In his home, Spanish was always spoken, Puerto Rican dishes were always prepared, they sang and danced to Puerto Rican music, they shared folk tales, anecdotes and jokes and always recognized Puerto Rican holidays. It is like the phenomenon discussed in one of Juan Antonio Corretjer's poems, *"Even if I were to be born on the Moon, I would still be a Puerto Rican."*

Carlos feels that two major institutions have influenced him the most throughout his life. One, the Church since his father, Rev. José A. Torres was and still is Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Chicago. Carlos was raised in an environment in which most of the familial activities centered around the Church. The Church was the center for many social and cultural activities where a great deal of human interac-

***It is like the phenomenon discussed in one of Juan Antonio Corretjer's poems* "Even if I were to be born on the Moon, I would still be a Puerto Rican."**

tion took place. It was something concrete; a place that united the lives, struggles and activities of numerous Puerto Rican families. Although he no longer considers himself "religious," he admits that he internalized many lessons on morals and values that were preached and practiced within the church. He asserts that the most important contribution the Church made in his life was instilling a sense of social responsibility within him.

The other was the political and community organizations he became involved with. These served as a catalyst for his ideological awakening and also training camp—the organizing of various struggles which included visiting Puerto Rican households, public meetings, marches and pickets, publishing and distributing of political literature, confrontations with politicians, police, slum landlords, the public school system of Chicago, etc. all helped him realize the bestial nature of the exploitation suffered by his people in the U.S. and their colonial condition in Puerto Rico. He could not ignore the fact that the grave social problems and sad conditions of life of his people did not exist in a vacuum, but were linked and were an extension of the same exploitative process that they had faced in Puerto Rico—colonialism.

It is in this context that we understand that each Puerto Rican in the mainland should struggle for the independence and socialism of Puerto Rico. Through this struggle they would attack the root of their problems and living conditions by attacking its direct cause—yanki imperialism. This is one of the reasons that led him to become an active member of the FALN (Armed Forces for National Liberation), a Puerto Rican clandestine organization in the U.S.

In 1976, Carlos was forced to go underground and was on the FBI's ten most wanted list. He was captured along with other comrades and sentenced to 88 years on charges including seditious conspiracy. Carlos Alberto is a regular writer for *Libertad*, and his short stories have been published in *Cuentos para la Libertad.*

In 1980, Carlos was placed in a cell at Cook County prison that measured only 6' x 4' and on a 23-hour lockdown. He was denied any exercise or recreation and family visits were limited to one hour a week. In addition, the cell was infested with rats and cockroaches and his food was of inferior quality and consistently cold.

Although he no longer considers himself "religious," he admits that he internalized many lessons on morals and values that were preached and practiced within the church.

Within a four-year period Carlos Alberto was moved six times to different prisons, and on many of these occasions he was placed in solitary confinement. The FBI encourages the prison guards to mistreat Carlos (this was

admitted by one of the guards). He was denied medical attention on a regular basis.

While under federal detention, he was kept in isolated cells inside the courtroom building and kept under lock and key 23 hours a day. He could not receive family visits nor write or receive letters or exercise. He was not allowed reading materials, any communication or correspondence and was denied access to recreational activities. Carlos participated in a hunger strike demanding his transfer to general population.

When he arrived at the federal prison in Talladega, Alabama, he was put in segregation for three weeks. He was informed that all of his correspondence had to be in English or it would be returned to the sender. The same arbitrary rule applied to his telephone conversations—they had to be in English or he risked being cut off. He was later put on restricted correspondence, which limited him to corresponding with only his mother, father, wife, and sisters. All other correspondence was prohibited. Again, the same rule applied to his visits. It was obvious that Carlos Alberto was singled out for mistreatment.

This mistreatment was carried out with the intention of making him "disappear" spiritually and intellectually. All of these violations are carried out to break the spirit and will of Carlos and the other prisoners of war. To this day, Carlos Alberto has continued to resist in the spirit of all Puerto Rican prisoners of war.

According to Carlos Alberto: *"The Prisoners of War are a living example of the commitment and intransigent struggle necessary to defeat the enemy.*

Our position of POW is an extension of our politics of rejecting personal accomodations at the cost of revolutionary principles and the well-being of the liberating movement, for this would be equal to leaving our people defenseless. It is the incorporation of the rejection of the colonial and yankee imperialist legality as represented by revolutionary armed struggle to our condition of captured combatants. It is the acknowledgement of the judgement by the international community, as well as that of the Puerto Rican liberation movement, that colonialism is a crime against humanity. Our position of POW is an example of our faith in the capacity that our people, and its patriotic organizations, have in carrying out their role as protagonists in bringing about justice for all Puerto Ricans."

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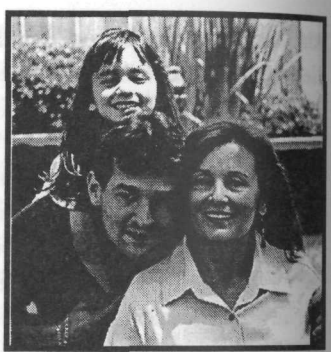
I was born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, in 1946. I attended grade school in Puerto Rico until my parents were forced to migrate to the United States in 1956. During those years of socio-economic crisis, my parents left the small farm where we had lived and relocated to Chicago's West Side. The Black Panther Party headqurters was located just two blocks away from our home.



Pictured with her son Tony and granddaughter Karinna

CARMEN VALENTÍN

Puerto Rican Prisoner of War

Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were later assassinated near this very site. It was in this predominantly Black neighborhood that Martin Luther King marched during those very significant years of the Civil Rights movement.

These events became the basis for my political formation and development. The racism, discrimination and social oppression, denounced by these great men, served as the point of departure in my search for equality and social justice.

I attended parochial schools during my primary and secondary educational years in Chicago. I continued my education at Northeastern Illinois University where I obtained my Bachelor's Degree in Spanish, later earning my Master's Degree in Secondary School Administration from Roosevelt University. I had completed half of the required courses toward my doctorate degree in psychology at Loyola University when I was captured in Evanston, Illinois, in 1980.

After I graduated from Northeastern Illinois University, I returned to Chicago's West Side community and began teaching at Tuley-Clemente High School, a predominantly Puerto Rican school. It was then that I began developing a clearer awareness of the sorry state in which our people found themselves. Despite the fact that I had suffered all of the injustices inherent in poverty, it was not until then that I was able to understand the ori-

I geared my efforts toward developing a proper perspective and pride among my fellow Puerto Ricans.

gins and consequences of these injustices.

My political awareness developed and grew, due in great part to very hard studying and the continuous practical experience I gained every day. I developed an unrelentless interest in helping my people learn about their cultural heritage and to identify their real enemy.

During the first years of my political awareness, I was active in almost every imaginable effort which addressed social reform. The list that follows contains most but, of course, not all of these efforts:

Education—As an educator, my primary efforts were geared toward presenting Puerto Rican culture and history as correctly and precisely as possible. I also tried to combat the severe racism and other problems of a socio-economic nature that affected the daily lives of our people. I geared my efforts toward developing a proper perspective and pride among my fellow Puerto Ricans. I wanted them to recognize the dangers of the colonialism we have all been subjected to for so long. These efforts caused a series of direct confrontations with the public school system, especially when they tried to suppress my educational presentations. I was a topic of great controversy in the Chicago Public School System and became the focus of its hostilities. I was finally forced to resign my teaching position.

Until the moment of my arrest, I was employed by Central YMCA College. I worked for the establishment and development of a wider range of educational programs and additional scholarships. Most importantly, I tried to inspire the younger members of the community to achieve higher academic goals. I wanted their ultimate goal to be that of helping our people. During my years of employment at this university, I sponsored and participated in the activities of the Iranian Student's Association (ISA). The members of this organization were active participants in the dethroning of the Shah. Those were years of struggles unequaled by any others! I also sponsored the Organization of Arab Students (OAS), known today as the Union of Arab Students. It was through sharing experiences with these students that I became aware of and gained respect for the struggles of the Palestinian and Arab peoples.

Housing—Besides struggling for better and increased housing, I also worked together with various community leaders to defeat "Plan 21," Chicago's politically motivated plan to disperse the families living in the West Town area.

I sponsored and participated in the activities of the Iranian Student's Association (ISA). The members of this organization were active participants in the dethroning of the Shah.

Language—I was one of the founding members and president of the José De Diego Bilingual Center. This center was created to preserve the cultural heritage of the Puerto Rican people and advance the study of Puerto Rican history, literature and culture.

Active member of the Board of Directors of Aspira of Illinois Inc., as well as sponsor of its student clubs.

Founding member of the Ruiz Belvis Educational Center. This center was specifically created as an alternative for those students who had been forced to drop out of high school, so that they might continue their education.

Police Brutality—I established committees to document the various incidents of police brutality against the Puerto Rican community. These committees also provided information about procedures that could be followed against the police officers involved in these abuses. I was also instrumental in establishing a legal office to inform community residents about their rights.

Prison Reform and Rehabilitation—I developed a series of seminars, programs and classes for Puerto Rican and other Latin American prisoners at the Statesville Penitentiary in Illinois. I taught these men about their literature and common heritage.

For many years, I was interested in changing the conditions of our social institutions, through as many means as possible. I realize that much of my energy was spent in producing empty reforms. However, I would not discard those years of political reform, for they laid the groundwork for my revolutionary life.

After long years of struggle, my beliefs acquired a high qualitative character. All my efforts were transformed from quantitative to qualitative ones, when I became a fighter in the clandestine liberation forces of my country.

On April 4, 1980, I was captured in Evanston, Illinois together with nine of my comrades. I was sentenced to 98 years in jail for being a member of the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN).

As a consequence of my capture, I was forced to leave my beloved son Antonio. He has grown up to become a perfect example of what I tried to instill in the minds of our youths for so long. He is bilingual (Spanish/English) and is very proud of his Puerto Rican cultural heritage. Antonio also possesses a high degree of understanding and awareness of our political reality. I especially treasure my visits with Antonio and my granddaughter, Karina.

I established committees to document the various incidents of police brutality against the Puerto Rican community.

During the festivities which celebrated the 120th anniversary of the Lares Uprising in Puerto Rico, the

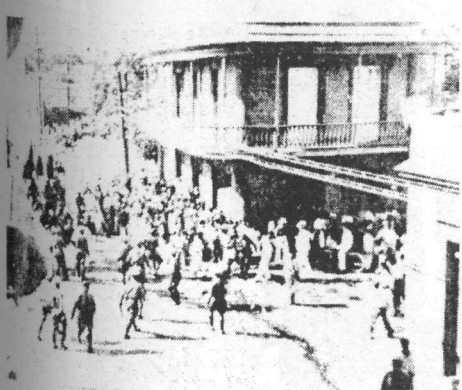
Unitary Committee Against Repression (CUCRE) awarded the "Mariana Bracetti Order" to us, the women prisoners of war. Antonio was present at this celebration as my personal representative. He also represented our comrade Dylcia Pagán and a whole new generation involved in the struggle. (See his message in *Libertad*, Vol. IX, No. XXI-XII). Antonio represented the Puerto Rican independence movement at a Human Rights Conference held in Japan in December of 1988. Japan was chosen by the Human Rights Committee as the country for my political asylum. I have hope that Antonio and Karina may enjoy a Free and Socialist Puerto Rico in the future. May he be able to finish building what we began: A FREE REPUBLIC!

My belief in the communist future of my country and ultimately the world's is still firm. My faith in you, my people, is equally firm.

Today we have come to the conclusion that 100 years in the history of the world and in this struggle are immaterial; we are ready to continue resisting and fighting until our final victory.

Wherever I may be, I will always be happy and honored to serve our people as a fighter and as an example for our oppressed masses.

FOR A FREE AND SOCIALIST PUERTO RICO!



Ponce Massacre

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Libertad
prisioneros politicos puertorriquenos
LIBERTAD
FREEDOM NOW!
National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners

EURO-AMERICANS

e New York Times

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1968

1,000 POLICEMEN REMOVE STUDENTS HOLDING 5 BUILDINGS AT COLUMBIA; 250 ARRESTED, SOME ARE INJURED

TRESPASS CHARGED

Protesters Dragged Out After Ignoring Pleas to Leave

The texts of committee and Kirk statements, Page 16.

By SYLVAN FOX

A handpicked force of some 1,000 policemen moved onto the Columbia University campus early today and began clearing demonstrators from five buildings the students had seized a week ago.

At 4 A.M., less than two hours after the police raid began, Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary reported to Mayor Lindsay that all five buildings that had been occupied by student demonstrators had been cleared.

Students were dragged and carried from the university buildings by the helmeted policemen, and there were several scuffles.

At the request of the university administration, the police arrested an estimated total of 250 students for trespassing in the buildings.

Scenes of Violence

Scenes of violence were observed by newsmen at Avery Hall. Students on the steps who were told by the police to move and did not so do were kicked and struck with handcuffs that were being used as brass

The New York Times by Burton Silverman

POLICE CLEAR CAMPUS: Handpicked members of the police force remove students from main entrance to Avery Hall at Columbia University in mass ouster this morning.

CAMPAIGN OF POOR BEGINS IN CAPITAL

Freeman, Clark and Wirtz Hear Militant Demands in Talks With 150 Leaders

By EARL CALDWELL

State Panel Recommends A 'Negative Income Tax'

By JOHN SIBLEY

Special to The New York Times

ALBANY, April 29—A committee of national business leaders called today for a Federal "negative income tax" to lift the country's 30 million poor above the poverty threshold. The 12-man committee, which was appointed by Governor Rockefeller to recom-

ROCKEFELLER SEES

Kathy was born on May 19, 1943. May 19 is a very special day because it is also the birthday of Ho Chi Minh, Malcolm X, Augusto Sandino, and Lorraine Hansbury. It is the day that José Martí died.

Kathy's father is a civil liberties lawyer and her mother is a poet. Their involvement and commitment to social causes was and continues to be an important part of Kathy's development.

KATHY BOUDIN

North American Political Prisoner

Her earliest memories about social issues began in the '50s with the McCarthy hearings, the execution of the Rosenbergs, the House UnAmerican Activities Committee persecution of people. In the '50s, she was involved in trying to stop atmospheric testing of atomic bombs.

As a child and young adult she planned to be a doctor. A visit to Cuba in 1960 opened up a vision of how changing the entire structure of society could make it possible for people to not only have better health care but housing, education, and broader participation in running society. This began to raise the idea for her of working to build a movement for social change—to make profound changes.

She graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1965, after spending her senior year at Moscow University studying Russian language and literature. Coming back to the United States, she joined an SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) community organizing project in Cleveland, Ohio, where she lived for the next 3 years.

In Cleveland she learned about the depths of racism, worked with black women and poor white women from Appalachia doing welfare rights organizing, and lived collectively with other organizers. Then,

The Civil Rights and the Black Liberation movements both taught her about the depth of problems in this country and also about the potential for change when people work together, when dignity and empowerment develop.

as the war in Vietnam grew, she began doing draft counseling and working to oppose the war. This included being involved in the Chicago Democratic Convention demonstrations of 1968.

The Civil Rights and the Black Liberation movements both taught her about the depth of problems in this country and also about the potential for change when people work together, when dignity and empowerment develop. At the same time, the escalating war in Vietnam and the attacks against the Black Movement revealed the lengths to which the U.S. government would go to stop change from happening.

In 1969, with three other friends, Kathy co-authored *The Bust Book* in the wake of the growing number of demonstrations and arrests. It talked about what to do if you are arrested or called before a grand jury.

During subsequent years, historical events continued to impact on Kathy's thinking—internationalism grew as struggles for freedom continued throughout the world—Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, Palestinians, Mozambicans, Chileans ...

It was during these years that the women's movement became important in Kathy's life, both on a personal level in understanding parts of her own life and on a social level in understanding the pressures on women in general. Reading women's poetry and writing poetry were part of this time.

From 1970 through 1981 Kathy was underground—until her arrest in Rockland County, New York on October 20, 1981. After spending two years in isolation with her codefendants and being moved to a variety of jails, she was finally placed in general population and is now at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, New York State's maximum security prison for women.

She has been teaching basic literacy and has completed a master's degree in education/adult literacy. She is also active in building a peer counseling and education program around AIDS and is a founding member of A.C.E.—AIDS Counseling and Education Organization. She has a wonderful son who is a member of a family of close friends, and a best friend and husband, David Gilbert, who was arrested at the same time as she. Her son has been the source of enormous joy and inspiration for her despite the pain of separation, and one of the things Kathy most enjoys doing is writing children's stories for both her son and his brothers.

Parole Eligibility: Serving 20 years-to-life sentence; earliest parole date: 2001.

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MARILYN BUCK

Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner

Marilyn Buck was born in Texas, a segregated state, in 1947. She is the daughter of a nurse and an Episcopal minister active in the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s. Her political and social awareness was heightened by the limitations placed on her as a woman. This sense of inequality enabled her to understand that racism and domination were an integral part of U.S. society that could not be reformed. She participated in protests against the war and racism. In 1967, she attended a Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) teacher-organizer school in Chicago. She remained there as co-editor of "New Left Notes," the SDS national newspaper. She participated with other women in insuring that women's liberation became part of the SDS national program.

The Vietnamese struggle to regain national sovereignty, the Cuban Revolution and the vision of "2, 3, MANY VIETNAMS," as well as the demands for justice and liberation by the colonized and oppressed peoples inside the United States, shaped the political and social consciousness and reality of the late 1960s. Marilyn, together with hundreds of other young people, became anti-imperialists supporting all just struggles for national liberation, women's liberation, and social and economic justice.

The reality of people's struggles for their homelands, to educate the people, gain control of their own labor and human dignity is a powerful, persuasive weapon to educate and organize — creating a sense of the power of collective organization and the will of a people willing to fight and sacrifice for justice. In 1968 she joined San

Marilyn, together with hundreds of other young people, became anti-imperialists supporting all just struggles for national liberation, women's liberation, and social and economic justice.

Francisco Newsreel, a radical filmmaking and propaganda collective. She primarily worked showing films as an organizing aid—at community meetings, high school groups, worker's committees, and even in the streets.

She also worked with international solidarity groups supporting the Vietnamese, the Palestinians, and the Iranian struggle against the Shah; she worked in solidarity with the Native American, Mexicano, and Black Liberation struggles. As an anti-imperialist activist and advocate of socialism, she was a target of the FBI Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPO), particularly because of her support for the Black Liberation struggle. In 1973, she was arrested and convicted of buying two boxes of handgun ammunition. The FBI accused her of being a member of the Black Liberation Army; she was sentenced to ten years, the longest sentence ever given for such an offense at that time.

As a political prisoner she was designated a "high security prisoner" by the state and was subjected to extraordinary measures in the name of security. She was sent to the control unit/behavior modification program at the Federal Women's Prison, Alderson, West Virginia. After more than a year in that unit she was released into population where she met Lolita Lebron, one of the Puerto Rican Nationalist prisoners, from whom she learned much about struggle and the sacrifices necessary. After repeated parole denials, she was granted a furlough in 1977; she did not return.

In 1979, New Afrikan revolutionary Assata Shakur was freed from prison by her comrades. Marilyn was a "suspect." In 1981, after an unsuccessful expropriation (robbery) of a Brink's armored truck, she was hunted down—with shoot-to-kill orders. Captured in May 1985, she faced four separate court trials over five years. In 1987, she was tried in New York for conspiracy to free and support political prisoners—particularly Assata—and to support the New Afrikan Independence struggle materially through "armed bank robbery." She was convicted and sentenced to 50 years in addition to the 20 years she had already been sentenced to. The state admitted the political motivation of the acts charged, but continues to assert that she and all political prisoners and P.O.W.s are "criminals." On May 11, 1988, at the end of the conspiracy trial in New York, Marilyn was indicted, along with six other North American anti-imperialists, for conspiracy to protest and alter government policies through use of

In 1979, New Afrikan revolutionary Assata Shakur was freed from prison by her comrades. The FBI considered Marilyn a "suspect" because of her political history and militancy.

violence against government and military buildings. She received a consecutive 10 years for conspiring to bomb the Capitol; she is now serving a total sentence of 80 years, with little chance of parole.

Marilyn spent three and one half years at the then federal maximum security unit for women at Marianna, Florida. After a number of efforts she, like the other women political prisoners held there, was transferred. Since May 1994, she's been at F.C.I. Dublin, CA where other women political prisoners and P.O.W.s from the Puerto Rican, anti-imperialist, and peace movements are.

Marilyn continues to believe that if one is concerned about and desires justice, liberation, and equality, one must join with anti-imperialist struggles worldwide. Despite the setbacks of the struggle for human rights and liberation, socialist transformation is the hope for the future of all humanity. Dare to struggle, dare to win!

Arrested: March 1973, fled custody; June 1977
Sentence: 80 years
Release Date: 2028
Time Imprisoned: 17 years; 13 years since 1985 capture

Assata Shakur living in Cuba. Marilyn Buck was a suspect in her liberation from prison

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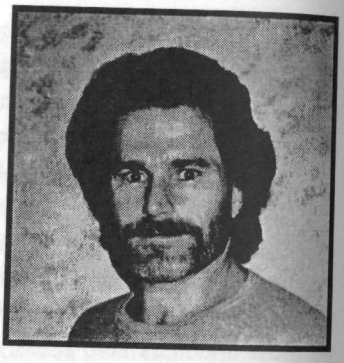

BILL DUNNE
Prisoner of War

I was made a prisoner of the state on October 14, 1979 in Seattle, Washington. Late that evening, I was picked up by paramedics while under the influence of police bullets near a shot-up and wrecked car containing some weapons and a dead jail escapee. According to the ensuing state and federal charges, I and a codefendant and unknown other associates of a San Francisco anarchist collective had conspired to effect a comrade's armed liberation from a Seattle jail and attempted to execute the plot on October 14, 1979. The charges further alleged the operation was financed by bank expropriation and materially facilitated by illegal acquisition of weapons, explosives, vehicles, ID and other equipment.

After long subjection to atrocious jail conditions and three sensationalized trials, I got a 90 year sentence in 1980. I subsequently got a consecutive 15 years as a result of an attempted self-emancipation in 1983. The aggregate 105 years is a "parole when they feel like it" sort of sentence.

I have no confidence in the American system of purported justice. It is designed to protect and advance the interests of the ruling class and is operated by people who identify much more with that class than with mine. Rarely, however, may this complicated social system's procedures be exploited by the people they are intended to suppress. Accordingly, I have contested my imprisonment legally, and recently filed another challenge. Contrary to applicable law, my federal conspiracy prosecution constituted double jeopardy, secret government information was used in imposing the sentence, and the written sentence is 50 years longer than the con-

I have no confidence in the American system of purported justice. It is designed to protect and advance the interests of the ruling class and is operated by people who identify much more with that class than with mine.

trolling oral sentence. That challenge languishes in federal court in Seattle.

My political motivation is without reservation radical left up to and including the left of people's revolution by any means necessary. I know of no single ideology whose name adequately defines my politics. The names traditionally associated with left formations— anarchist, communist, socialist, etc.— have become too vague and diffuse to be sufficiently defining. They have been tied to such a wide array of failed sects and moribund social organizations that it is impossible to know if they offer the solutions requisite to real world revolution. Clarity is important in political interchange. If seeking it requires avoiding easy nomenclature that might carry unintended baggage and necessitates inconveniently long explanations, so be it.

I cannot define as an anarchist because while the ultimate end of all left struggle is the anarcho-communism the withering of the state will leave, the many anarchisms lack the structure to get from here to there. Nevertheless, I recognize the value of anarchy's contributions in promoting local autonomy, rejecting excessive hierarchy, and incorporating a broader spectrum of human activity into political consciousness.

I cannot define as a communist because the structures that have grown out of communist thought have been too prone to authoritarian deformations and rigidity, and the many communisms lack the flexibility to resist pressure in those directions. Yet I nevertheless recognize Marx, Lenin, Che and other communists as high on the list of contributors to liberating theory and practice.

Neither do I define as a socialist because that can mean virtually anything from national socialist fascism leftward. I nevertheless recognize the present objective of revolutionary struggle as a world socialism in the most radically left sense where all people have the greatest possible freedom to develop their full human potential. The pursuit of material, political and social equality on every level is close to my core.

I am a collectivist, long having recognized that in numbers there is strength and capability and security and satisfaction. There is more humanity in cooperation than in isolation. I am a technician, knowing that we, the people, can create the revolutionary material and social technology that will free us. I am an advocate of both local autonomy and federated centralization, a balance ensuring the equitable distribution

I am a collectivist, long having recognized that in numbers there is strength and capability and security and satisfaction. There is more humanity in cooperation than in isolation.

of power. I am a supporter of all progressive struggles against imperial capital. I am a partisan of armed and other subterranean struggle as unavoidable in furtherance of class war. Revolution is not and never will be legal. I am a prisoner of war — class war. Class is the source and sustenance of what makes revolution necessary.

I am also happily atheist, anti-sexist, anti-racist, globalist, anti-authoritarian, environmentalist, anti-imperialist, democratic (little d). However, none of those sufficiently characterizes my politics over the others that I can define myself by any of them alone. Rather than a gaggle of competitve "identities," my vision of the road to revolution encompasses all of them as necessarily synergistic strands we must weave into a new social fabric.

I see that road running not only through traditional forms of struggle, but also in new and innovative directions. Creating an alternative socio-economic base of collective living and working situations is one. That will help us drive past the apparatus of repression's increasing capacity to co-opt and suppress older forms of struggle and develop our theory and practice in the process. The diverse organs of that base will grow together into a body politic of interwoven free zones, displacing ruling class institutions with our own.

My present lack of formal identification with a particular theoretical system does not prevent me from struggle. Exclusive adherence to a hard line is not necessary to finding comrades or laying down positive practice. Revolution road is not that narrow at this juncture, nor should it be. Ultimately, we of the left have a common destination: the collective to which humanity will evolve, faster or slower according to the efficacy of our work.

Toward attaining that destination, we need to cooperate in creating a new revolutionary praxis synthesizing the lessons of the past and a clear analysis of the present. With mutual struggle, we can weld the diverse elements of our side of the barricade into a powerful weapon against the depredations of imperial capital. Our overwhelming human commonality can and must make it an all people's tool of emancipation from the class enemy that afflicts us all.

January 12, 1998

Bill Dunne
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P.O. Box 1000
Marion, IL 62959-7500

LINDA EVANS

Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner

Born May 11, 1947, in Fort Dodge, Iowa. Internationalist, revolutionary, and anti-imperialist since 1967. SDS regional organizer against the war in Vietnam and to support Black liberation. Participated in 1969 anti-war delegation to North Vietnam to receive U.S.-POWs released by the Vietnamese. Arrested 1970 for Conspiracy/Crossing State Lines to incite riot in organizing SDS National Action (Days of Rage) in Chicago, and for Conspiracy/Transportation of Weapons and Explosives in Detroit. Charges dropped because of government misconduct — gathering evidence through illegal wiretaps.

Political/cultural worker in guerrilla street theater troupe, all-women's band, and women's printing/graphics collective in Texas. Active in the women's liberation movement and in the lesbian community. Organized support for struggles led by Black and Chicano/Mexicano grassroots organizations against the Ku Klux Klan, forced sterilization, and killer cops. Fought racism/white supremacy and zionism as a member of the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee. Worked with Southern African, Palestinian, and Central American solidarity organizations to raise material aid for national liberation movements and to oppose apartheid and U.S. intervention. Built support for Black/New Afrikan, Puerto Rican, and Native American POWs and political prisoners, and for the right of these nations to independence and self-determination.

Active in the women's liberation movement and in the lesbian community. Organized support for struggles led by Black and Chicano/Mexicano grassroots organizations against the Ku Klux Klan, forced sterilization, and killer cops.

Began working to develop clandestine resistance movement capable of conducting armed struggle as part of a multi-levelled overall revolutionary strategy. Arrested

May 11, 1985. Charges originate in efforts to build clandestine infrastructure (acquisition of weapons, ID, safe houses, finances, politico-military training), and armed actions to bring the war against U.S. imperialism home to the United States. Actions carried out to fight in solidarity with peoples around the world struggling for national liberation and self-determination, to work toward building a socialist revolution to transform U.S. society, and to support liberation for oppressed nations within U.S. borders (Puerto Rico, Native American nations, occupied Mexico, the Black/New Afrikan nation).

Since arrest, has acted as a jailhouse lawyer advocating for prisoners' rights on an individual and collective basis. AIDS peer counselor and educator. Founding member of PLACE (Pleasanton AIDS Counseling and Education) at FCI-Pleasanton since 1991.

Charges: New York — Harboring a fugitive (Marilyn Buck), 3 years; possession of a weapon by a felon, 2 years. Louisiana — False statements to acquire four legal guns and ammunition, original sentence 40 years, reduced on a technicality to 30 additional years. Washington, D.C. — Member of Resistance Conspiracy case with Marilyn Buck, Laura Whitehorn, Susan Rosenberg, Tim Blunk, and Alan Berkman. Convicted of "conspiracy to influence, change, and protest policies and practices of the U.S. government concerning various international and domestic matters through the use of violent and illegal means." Indictment charged the conspiracy carried out eight political bombings claimed by the Revolutionary Fighting Group, Armed Resistance Unit, and Red Guerrilla Resistance in Washington, D.C. and New York from 1983 to 1985. Military and government targets included U.S. Capitol to protest the invasion of Grenada and shelling of Lebanon; National War College, Navy Yard Computer Center, and Navy Yard Officers' Club to oppose U.S. aggression against El Salvador, the contra war in Nicaragua, and in support of Puerto Rican independence; the South African consulate to oppose U.S. support for apartheid; Israeli Aircraft Industries to support Palestinian liberation and protest U.S. support for zionism; an FBI Office to expose political repression; and the New York Patrolmen's Benevolent Association to oppose police brutality and killer cops.

Total Sentence: — 40 years.

Parole "eligibility" — November 1995.

Statutory release date — 2012.

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LARRY GIDDINGS

Anti-Authoritarian P.O.W. / Political Prisoner

Larry was born October 6, 1952, in Rosstal, Bayern, Germany. He spent his early years and some teens in Germany. Returning to the United States in 1968, he lived in Glen Burnie, Maryland, until dropping out of high school in 1968-1969.

Wounded during an arms expropriation and shoot-out on August 21, 1971 (with four others, in Los Angeles, California), he was arrested at the scene. His trial focused on the need for armed struggle against the United States Government and judicial system and the liberation of prisoners. Upon conviction, he served seven years. Larry spent more than a year on parole (1978-1979), living and working with a multi-cultural political, food and prison-support collective in San Francisco. After completing parole, he became involved in clandestine activities.

On October 14, 1979, Larry was again wounded and captured. This time, during the liberation of a freedom fighter from a Seattle, Washington jail. Having been in prison 19 years for this action, he is serving the last sentence (75 years) and is eligible to appear before the parole board in 2003. When, and if, Larry achieves release he will be deported to Germany.

Larry's non- nationalist political analyses and anti-authoritarian commitment have played a key role in police repression of himself and friends.

In Giddings' view: "Anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism are integral to non-authoritarian analysis and practice. I

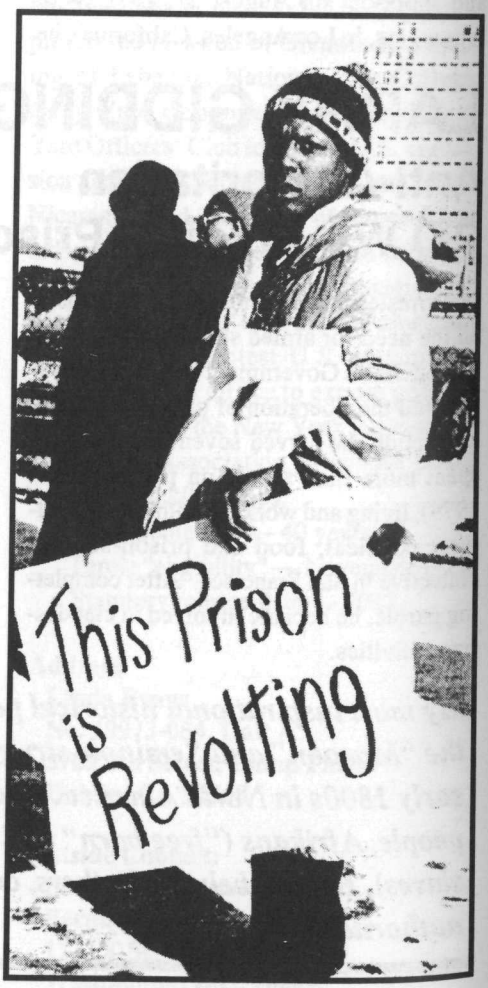
My most inspirational historical period is that of the "Maroon" and Seminole struggles of the early 1800s in North America. Indigenous people, Afrikans ("free born" and escaped slaves), Euro rebels, and others, created non-authoritarian structures. . .

seek a world where people live without cultural, national, or racial oppression: A non-nation-state world; a world without borders. My most inspirational historical period is that of the "Maroon" and Seminole struggles of the early 1800s in North America. Indigenous people, Afrikans ("free born" and escaped slaves), Euro rebels and others, created non-authoritarian structures, multi-racial/multi-cultural alliances, and autonomy between numerous groups. From these roots, I believe a truly dynamic and successful movement for a socially and ecologically sound world will arise. The current struggles in Chiapas, Mexico reflect many of these elements."

Charges: Aiding escape, assault on police officer, conspiracy to effect escape, and bank expropriations.

Sentence: Two life sentences, consecutive; and 80 years consecutive to the two lifes.

Parole Eligibility: 2003



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The starting point for me is identifying with other people. That solidarity, that tenderness, mandates standing with the oppressed — the vast majority — against the power structure. The 50% of children in sub-Saharan Africa suffering from severe malnutrition, the women and girls sold into sexual bondage in Thailand, the homeless kids scavenging in the streets of Sao Paulo,

DAVID GILBERT

North American Political Prisoner

the prisoners with AIDS locked in isolation cells in Alabama . . . they are all precious human beings whose lives matter.

Reality burst into my consciousness when I was 15, with the Greensboro sit-ins of February 1960. I guess I had been unusually naive in that I fervently believed in America's rhetoric about democracy and equality. This promise was totally belied by the patent racism, as well as by the U.S. practice of imposing brutal dictators on Third World nations around the globe. The Civil Rights Movement also showed me more of a sense of humanity and nobility of purpose than I found in the white suburbs where I had grown up.

In 1962 I joined the Congress of Racial Equality, and in 1965 I started the Committee Against the War in Vietnam at Columbia University. I was one of the founding members of the SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) chapter there, and in 1967 I wrote the first national SDS pamphlet that named the system as "U.S. Imperialism." I participated in the Columbia strike of 1968.

The rise of the women's movement and determined efforts by women comrades showed me the importance of struggling against sexism and of striving to live our humanist values in our personal relationships.

In response to the

The Civil Rights movement also showed me more of a sense of humanity and nobility of purpose than I found in the white suburbs where I had grown up.

The Greensboro sit-ins helped David Gilbert see the reality of racism in the u.s.

murderous government assault on the Black Liberation Movement and the unending, masssive bombing of Vietnam, the Weather Underground formed in the early 1970's. I spent 10 years in underground resistance. On October 20, 1981, I was captured when a unit of the Black Liberation Army and allied white revolutionaries attempted to take funds from a Brinks truck, with the unfortunate result of a shoot-out in which a guard and two policemen were killed. Myatari Shabaka Sundiata was subsequently killed by police, while numerous other comrades were captured and given long sentences. I was sentenced under New York State's "Felony Murder Law" (even with no allegations of doing any shooting, a participant in the robbery can be given full legal responsibility for all deaths) to 75 years to life, which makes my earliest parole eligiblity in 2056.

I am very fortunate to have a thoughtful, loving, magnificent son and to have many fine friends and family who have stood by me. In prison, I have tried to continue to contribute through political writings. Also, since my co-defendant Kuwasi Balagoon died of AIDS on December 13, 1986, I have been intensely active as an advocate and educator around AIDS in prison.

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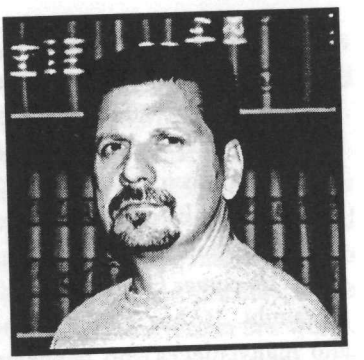

POLITICAL BACKGROUND: Jaan Laaman has been in the Freedom Struggle since the 1960's. During the 60's and 70's: active member of the United Steelworkers of America, anti-war/anti-imperialist activist and SDS organizer, militant in armed underground work, political prisoner and officer in the New England Prisoners Association, contributor to socialist and revolutionary journals.

JAAN KARL LAAMAN

Ohio 7 Political Prisoner

During the 80's and 90's: anti-klan and community security activist, martial arts instructor for Amandla Peoples Security in Boston, anti-apartheid and national liberation support worker, militant in armed clandestine struggle, human rights and political prisoner rights work.

CAPTURE AND CHARGES: On November 4, 1984, five people including Jaan were captured in Ohio. Two more people were arrested in 1985, and together these 3 women and 4 men came to be known as the Ohio-7. The U.S. government labelled the pursuit and capture of these people as the largest fugitive hunt it ever conducted. Jaan and the other Ohio-7 comrades were charged with being members of the United Freedom Front (UFF), a clandestine anti-imperialist organization. The UFF took responsibility for urban guerrilla actions targeting many institutions of repression in the 1970's and 80's. These included attacks on the offices of the South African apartheid regime, U.S. military bases, war profiteer corporations like GE, IBM and Union Carbide. Jaan was charged with seditious, RICO, and bombing conspiracies, weapons charges and involvement in firefights with armed agents of the government.

SENTENCES: In 1985, a Massachusetts State court convicted Jaan of being in a firefight with State Police and weapons charges. He was sentenced to 39 to 45 years. In Brooklyn Federal court in 1986, the government convicted him of bombing conspiracy and sentenced him to 53 years. All sentences were run consecutively and Jaan has a total of 98 years, with no parole eligibility before 2017.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND: Jaan has a 16 year old son, Ricky. He lives with his mother, Barbara Curzi, who also was a member of the Ohio-7. She too was imprisoned, for 7 years.

Jaan is an Estonian, having immigrated to the U.S. with his family when he was a child. He comes from a close knit blue collar family. He has 3 brothers and 2 sisters and many nieces and nephews. Jaan's mother, while getting elderly, continues to provide him love and concern.

Born March 21, 1948, Jaan and his family arrived in the U.S. in the early 1950's. His childhood years were spent in the Roxbury section of Boston. Later he and his family moved to a blue collar Italian neighborhood in Buffalo.

Jaan became politically active in the 60's. While attending Cornell and the University of New Hampshire, he spent much time doing anti-war, civil rights and national liberation support work. In 1971 he went underground. A year later he was imprisoned for armed anti-war activities (bombing a Nixon reelection office). Jaan continued to struggle for human rights and justice in captivity. In 1978, the government had to release him after he won a belated appeal. Moving to Boston, Jaan became active in anti-racist, community security and Southern African support work. He also reestablished contact with the clandestine movement. Jaan taught Tae Kwon Do for Amandla Peoples Security, a multinational community security organization and martial arts academy he helped found. During this time he met his close comrade Barbara Curzi and her two lovely young daughters. They became a family and soon their son Ricky was born. Due to increased repression, including death threats to their family, they began living clandestinely. At this point Jaan shifted totally to underground work, building clandestine networks and conducting guerrilla struggle.

LIFE IN CAPTIVITY: In 1988, after four years of trials, Jaan was sent to the U.S. prison in Leavenworth, Kansas. He remains there today. While at Leavenworth he has completed BA degrees in sociology and psychology. He continues his long time study of Shiatsu (acupressure) and provides treatments to other prisoners. Jaan does literacy tutoring and political studies with interested prisoners. He also writes for numerous U.S. and international leftist periodicals. Along with other political prisoners, he works on numerous campaigns and outreach efforts, like the campaign to support Chairman

...Freedom Struggle is necessary and possible in the U.S., just like anywhere else in this world. We need to create the conditions and changes, by every possible means, for all our people to have a chance for a real life.

Gonzalo in Peru and the campaign to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Jaan is a listed class war prisoner of the Partisan Defense Committee. Since the mid 90's he has also been involved with the Anarchist Black Cross Federation in the U.S.

SOME PERSONAL THOUGHTS FROM JAAN: Sitting here writing this in 1998, my 14th year of captivity, I wonder what images the reader might draw from this biographical sketch: Freedom Struggle, SDS in the 60's, clandestinity. Perhaps you are thinking I am very brave/very foolish/very committed/very off base; in any case it is likely you think of me, and other political prisoners, as different than most people you know. I'd like to say, for myself and many other political prisoners who I personally know, that we are much less different than you might suspect. In fact I think of myself as much like many people who came of age in the 60's, 70's or 80's. What's more, the realities today are as harsh and pressing, as when I first became politically active. Homelessness was not even a term 30 years ago. The youth today, my 16 year old son included, appear to be more feared, hated, and at risk than ever. The elderly, including my mom, are facing increased hardships and cutbacks. Pollution of our planet, police and government abuses, crises in education and healthcare, to name just some of the issues that brought me into struggle, are still present. Meanwhile reformist solutions are still virtually nonexistent. Whether we call it the "New World Order" or simply imperialism and injustice in America, the need for a successful Freedom Struggle remains.

Perhaps the real difference between political prisoners and other concerned folks is our understanding that a Freedom Struggle is necessary and possible in the U.S., just like anywhere else in this world. We need to create the conditions and changes, by every possible means, for all our people to have a chance for a real life. Though sometimes I feel just a bit tired, I remain fundamentally optimistic that true liberation for nations, classes, and especially for poor and working people can and will be achieved.

AMANDLA!
Jaan K. Laaman
January 1998,
USP Leavenworth

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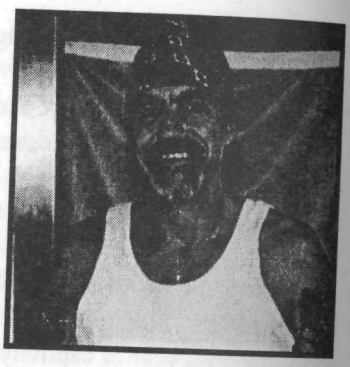

RAYMOND LUC LEVASSEUR

I was born in Sanford, Maine, on October 10, 1946. My people are of French-Canadian background. My father was born in Quebec and emigrated to this country with his family. They came looking for work in textile mills and shoe factories. I followed my family's footsteps and began working in a shoe factory when I was 17. I have since worked in various mills, loading docks, construction, logging, and farm work.

In 1965 I joined the army and in 1967 I did a tour of duty in Vietnam where I was deeply affected by the devastation of the war on the Vietnamese people and their country.

In 1968 I began my first political activism with the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) in Tennessee. Our work centered on bringing an end to the war, supporting the formation of labor unions, and support work for Black Liberation.

Police repression ensued, and from 1969 through 1971 I spent most of my time in segregation cells of the Tennessee state penitentiary.

When released in 1971 I became a state organizer for Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). In 1973 I left VVAW and began working with prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families. I became an organizer with a community-based group called SCAR (Statewide Correctional Alliance for Reform). Much of our work centered on "survival programs" such as a community bail fund,

...in 1967 I did a tour of duty in Vietnam where I was deeply affected by the devastation of the war on the Vietnamese people and their country.

prisoners union, alternative paper, obtaining jobs and temporary housing, welfare rights, martial arts program, and support work for Third World struggles and political prisoners.

In 1974 I was involved with the formation of the Red Star North bookstore, which also operated a free-books-to-prisoners program.

In late 1974 I went underground because of my commitment to building a revolutionary movement that could grow, sustain, and defend itself at each stage of its development. In 1974 police repression had reached intolerable levels.

In 1984 I was captured by agents of the federal government. In 1985 I was tried and convicted of bombings against u.s. military facilities, military contractors, and corporations doing business in South Africa. I received a 45-year sentence.

In 1986, I was indicted with seven others for seditious conspiracy and RICO. The indictment charged me with membership in the Sam Melville-Jonathan Jackson Unit and the United Freedom Front. These groups carried out a series of actions from 1976 through 1984 in support of Puerto Rican Independence; freedom struggles in Southern Africa; "for the Sufferer's — the Homeless — the Unemployed — the Hungry — the Imprisoned — those who die in the streets of amerikkka;" and in opposition to U.S. war crimes in Central America.

In what became the longest sedition trial in the history of the U.S., I was acquitted of seditious conspiracy. The jury deadlocked on the RICO charges and the government was forced to dismiss them. Following our victory in this trial I was sent directly to the control unit prison at Marion, Illinois.

In February 1995 I was transferred to the government's highest security prison - Administrative Maximum, Florence, Colorado.

I have three daughters: Carmen, Simone, and Rosa.

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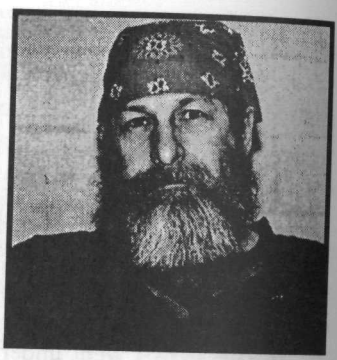

TOM MANNING
Anti-Imperialist Freedom Fighter

Boston-born and raised in a large, Irish working-class family—never enough $—though my father worked day and night—with sleep in between—his only days off were when he was hurt or some crisis in the family—a longshoreman and a postal clerk—he worked himself to death—trying to get one end to meet the other—he never did make ends meet—that would be a cycle and capitalism is not made that way—he always got the worst end.

As kids we tried to help where we could—I shined shoes and sold newspapers on the subways and in the bars, otherwise I spent my time like most kids in the neighborhood—roaming the docks and freight yards looking for anything that could be converted into cash, bartered or used in some way, also playing stickball and raising pigeons. As I grew older I worked as a stockboy, then construction laborer till joining the military in 1963. Cuba in '64—Vietnam in '65/'66.

Back on the streets for a minute, then state prison for five years, armed robbery and assault and battery. Given the area where I grew up, and being a 'Nam vet, prison was par for the course. I ran into a lot of boyhood friends and veterans inside. I became somewhat politicized in prison, taking part in food and work strikes, being around people willing to teach and organize at great personal risk. I spent my last 14 months in Walpole's 10 Block, where I first read Che, and where all the prisoners, Black, Brown, and white were united out of necessity. In contrast to general population in the prison and in the city of Boston.

I completed my sentence in May of '71—took one quick tour of the old streets, and headed for the country, the woods and small towns of northern New En-

Given the area where I grew up, and being a 'Nam vet, prison was par for the course... I became somewhat politicized in prison, taking part in food and work strikes...

gland, where I met Carol, married and had a child, the first of three. Jeremy, Tamara, and Jonathan. The second two coming during our ten years underground. At Portland, Maine, we became active in an organization named SCAR, whose work was done by and for prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their loved ones.

The work was rapidly expanding into all areas of the community, finding jobs and housing for people coming out, trying to stay out, support and welfare advocacy, transportation to the prisons for visiting, childcare, organizing young people, a bail fund, a bookstore.

With this work and the study it required, it became increasingly clear who got the best end, at whose expense, and what was needed also became clear—socialism—a system where ends meet. The bosses oppose this system with a vengeance. They attack it with their armies and police. The People must fight for their own system in all ways—one of these being armed clandestine struggle. We have a long way to go, but we are getting there.

I was captured in 1985, sentenced to 58 years in federal prison for a series of bombings carried out as armed propaganda against apartheid in South Africa, U.S. imperialism in Latin and Central America, including a concerted campaign against Mobil Oil and U.S. military targets in solidarity with the FALN's campaign for the release of the five Nationalist prisoners. And against racist, genocidal capitalism here in the belly of the beast. I'm also sentenced to 80 years (two 25 to life, plus 20 for armed robbery, plus 10 for escape) in New Jersey for the self-defense killing of a state trooper.

At present I am in the U.S. penitentiary at Leavenworth, KS, where I am classified as a high max prisoner restricted to a high accountability status (orange card) that requires me to be checked in every two hours during the daytime and evening hours. I am forced to work in the prison print shop, which has higher security than any other jobshop. And if I refuse or am fired from this job I'll be returned to the hole.

This is the first prison I've been held in where I can walk around un-handcuffed and un-shackled. The prison authorities, because of my political beliefs and affiliations, have declared me a "threat to the security and orderly running" of their prison system. As a result, I have spent the past 12 years in continual lockdown, from the control unit in New Jersey, to U.S.P. Marion in Illinois, and at A.D.X. Super-max in Florence, Colorado.

I stand accused of be-

The People must fight for their own system in all ways—one of these being armed clandestine struggle. We have a long way to go, but we are getting there.

ing a part of the Sam Melville/Jonathan Jackson unit in the 1970's and the United Freedom Front in the 1980's. I am proud of the association and all that it implies.

"... Revolution is never begun anew, only continued where others have left off..."

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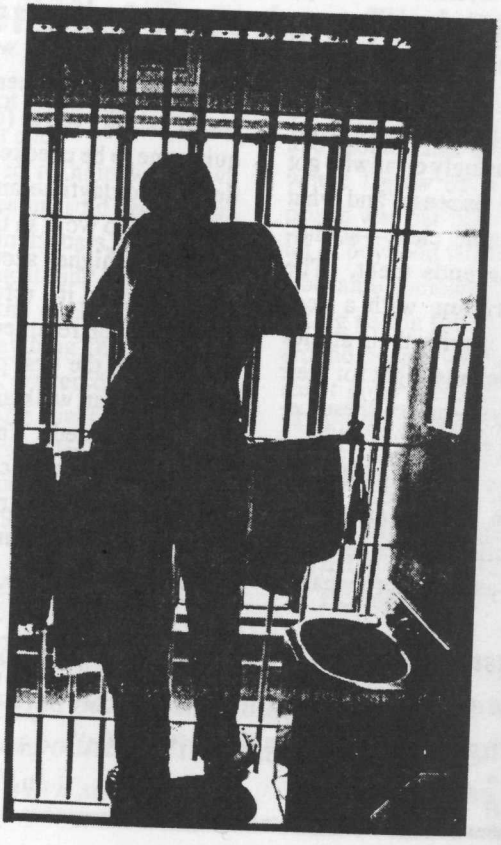
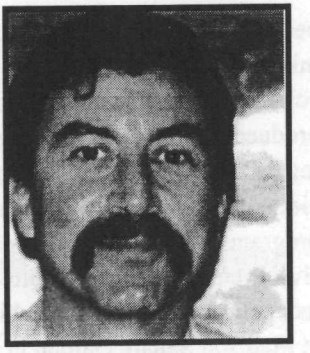




CLAUDE MARKS

North American Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner

I consider myself to be politically conscious since my early teens. I grew up in Los Angeles where my parents, my sister and I landed in 1954 after fleeing the repression and anti-Semitism of the Peron dictatorship in Argentina. I have vivid memories of the Watts Riots and the racist hysteria fomented by the police to justify their high-tech military repression. Hearing about the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley encouraged me to editorialize against the racism of my all-white junior high school student government in the school paper. For this I was excised from my post as editor and invited to become a sports photographer instead. My editorial never saw the light of day, but my love of journalism and my hatred of injustice would stay with me and reemerge.

I was attending UC Berkeley when I started working with KPFA Pacifica radio to cover a militant student strike demanding support for the recognition of a Third World studies department. From that point on, for close to ten years, I reported and produced programs for Pacifica, eventually dropping out of school to become the production director of the station. This was an incredibly rich time in which to have consistent access to the airwaves. We were able to expose listeners to revolutionary voices ranging from Ho Chi Minh to George Jackson to Assata Shakur. We covered Wounded Knee and Attica, the women's liberation movement and the struggle for gay and lesbian rights.

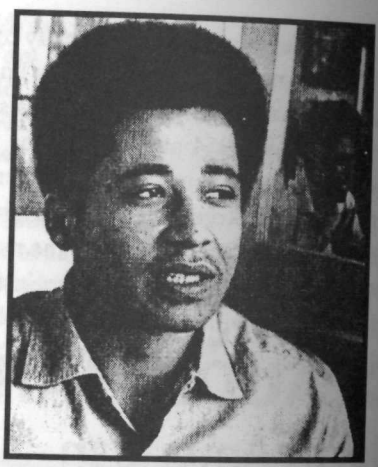
Hearing about the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley encouraged me to editorialize against the racism of my all-white junior high school student government in the school paper. For this I was excised from my post as editor and invited to become a sports photographer instead.

In this period, my own political thinking grew and my commitment to social change

became more concrete and direct. By the mid-seventies, I had become aware of the colonial situation in Puerto Rico and helped produce a series of radio programs exposing the ongoing US occupation and oppression of the Puerto Rican nation. The programs helped build support for a massive event in solidarity with the growing independence movement which was held at Madison Square Garden in the mid-seventies.

In 1985, after years of involvement with the Puerto Rican struggle, I was among those targeted in a sting operation aimed at repressing the most militant sectors of the independence movement and their supporters. Donna Willmott, my codefendant, and I were charged with transporting explosives as part of an FBI-engineered escape conspiracy of Puerto Rican prisoner of war, Oscar Lopez-Rivera, from Leavenworth prison. I avoided prosecution at the time by living underground for nine years along with my partner, Diana Block, and our two children, Tony and Leila. I remained a fugitive until December 1994 when I surrendered, along with my codefendant Donna Willmott. Our difficult decision to surrender voluntarily stemmed from the desire to end our prolonged political isolation and resume a public, politically committed life.

Today I am seeing the world from behind the razor wire myself. Commitment to struggle for a better world continues to be a strong driving force in my life. I understand more viscerally than ever the necessity to build a movement to free all our sisters and brothers inside and I see the Jericho 98 amnesty campaign as a signficant step on that road.



George Jackson was one of the revolutionary voices heard while Claude Marks was production director of Pacifica radio.

"My legs are tied with a rope, and my arms are bound at my side, but I smell the sweet perfume of woodland flowers and hear the birds. Impossible to keep these from me. Anyhow, now the road is not so long, and I am not alone."

- Ho Chi Minh

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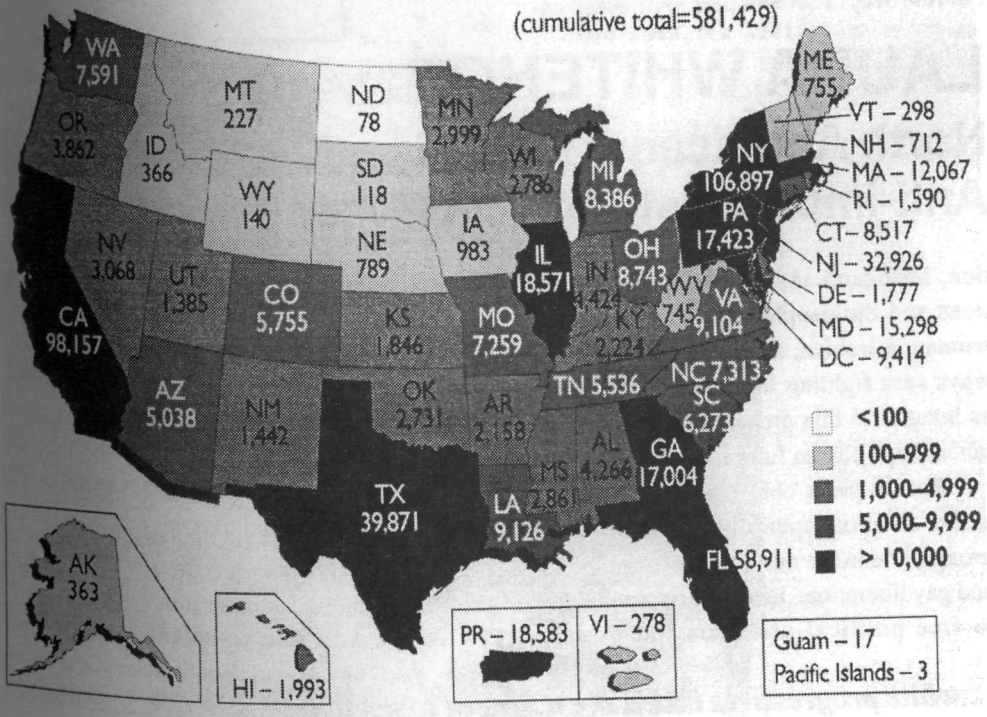
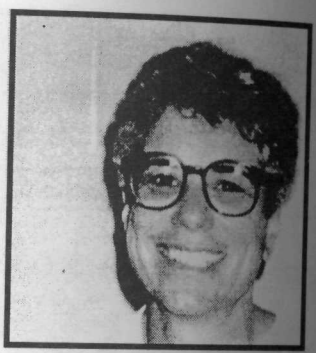
Figure 2. Total AIDS Cases Reported through December 1996





LAURA WHITEHORN

North American Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner

I am a revolutionary anti-imperialist political prisoner. I was arrested in 1985 for acts of armed struggle against the racism and colonialism of the u.s. government. Since the 1960's it's been clear to me that white progressives inside the u.s. need to act to try to stop the war crimes and human rights violations of our government against Puerto Rico, the New Afrikan or Black nation, Mexicano and Native American nations and the people of the world. As a woman, a lesbian, and a socialist, I've always seen fighting for my own liberation as integral to this process. Without resistance, hope has no future.

For 20 years before my arrest, I was active in anti-imperialist and anti-racist groups, and in the movements for women's and gay liberation. I worked on campaigns to free political prisoners like Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, the 5 Puerto Rican Nationalist prisoners, the Republic of New Afrika 11, and Geronimo Pratt. In that work, we celebrated these men and women as the heart of the movements for freedom and justice, loved by us and hated by the government because they showed that liberation is worth fighting for. I also worked in support of the Attica Brothers and other prisoners fighting for basic human rights.

...white progressives inside the u.s. need to act to try to stop the war crimes and human rights violations of our government against Puerto Rico, the New Afrikan or Black nation, Mexicano and Native American nations and the people of the world.

Along with five co-defendants (the "Resistance Conspiracy 6"), I was indicted for "conspiracy to oppose, protest, and change the policies and practices of the u.s. government in domestic and interna-

tional matters by violent and illegal means," including the bombing of the u.s. capitol building in 1983 after the government invaded Grenada and shelled Beirut. Other bombings included government and military targets as well as the New York Police Benevolent Association after the murder of Eleanor Bumpers, the zionist Israeli Aircraft Industries, and the South African consulate during the era of apartheid. For this case and several smaller related charges I am serving a 23-year sentence.

In prison, I've worked on AIDS/HIV peer education and support programs. I am scheduled for release via "mandatory release" (i.e. the end of my sentence after "good time" is subtracted) in 1999.

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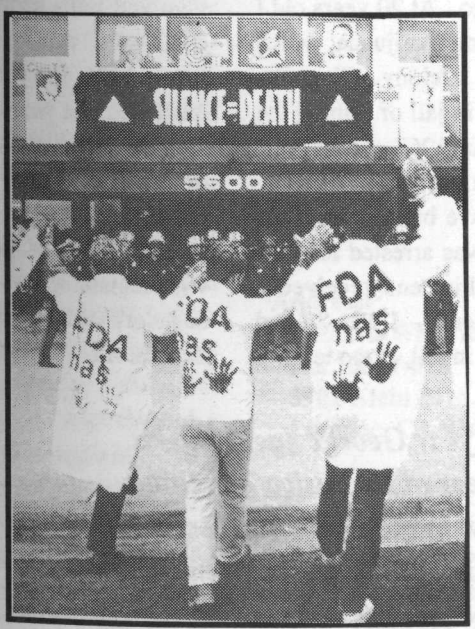

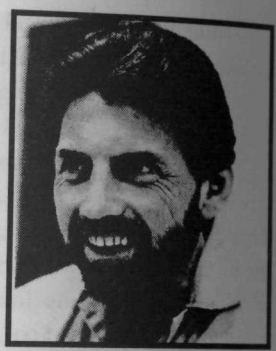

RICHARD WILLIAMS
Ohio 7 Political Prisoner

I am a single father and grandfather. I was born on November 4, 1947, in Beverly, Massachusetts, which is a small coastal city 25 miles north of Boston. My mother was a factory worker and seamstress and my father was a machine operator. I have one sister younger than me by six years. Just when the draft was getting heavy for Vietnam I turned 18 years old and promptly received my notice. Like most working class kids, white or Black, there was no easy way out of it. Either get drafted, join, or hide. I chose not to go. At 20 years old I was arrested for having marijuana, which in Massachusetts was a felony. Given the choice of six months in jail or joining the army, I went to jail in 1967 and became ineligible for the draft.

I continued to have brushes with the law when in 1971 I was arrested for robbery in New Hampshire and received a seven-to-15-year sentence. I was 23 and faced five solid years in jail, at the least. I realized at that time that I was going nowhere fast, that I needed to change something—so I started with myself. I became involved with trying to better the prison conditions I was in, which were deplorable. It was 1971, the year George Jackson was murdered, the year of the Attica Rebellion. There was unrest in most prisons, because overall the prisons were brutal and inhumane. I was elected chairperson of the New England Prisoner Association. Inside, I met with legislators, and participated in food and work strikes and protests for better conditions. I read a lot of history and worked in political study groups. I was locked up, beaten, and shipped out for my activities. I learned through study and my efforts that the struggle was much

It was 1971, the year George Jackson was murdered, the year of the Attica Rebellion. There was unrest in most prisons, because overall the prisons were brutal and inhumane.

larger than my then surroundings. I became a communist.

Upon my release I worked briefly with the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee. I went to work for the New England Free Press—a radical, collective print shop—for almost 2 years. Along with Barbara, Jaan, and Kazi, I was part of The Amandla Concert in Harvard Stadium in 1979. Featuring Bob Marley, Amandla was a benefit concert to provide aid to liberation forces in Southern Africa. My role was as part of a People's Security Force which provided security for the concert. We also did security work for the community—such as house sitting with people who were under attack by racists. We went to Greensboro, North Carolina in 1979 to protest the killings of SWP (Socialist Workers Party) members by the KKK.

I went underground to join the armed clandestine movement in 1981 and was captured in Cleveland on November 4th, 1984, my 37th birthday.

I was convicted for five of the United Freedom Front (UFF) bombings in 1986 in Brooklyn Federal Court. In 1987 I got a hung jury at the Somerville, N.J. trial in the death of a state trooper during a shoot-out with Tom Manning. Next I went through a two-year long trial in Springfield, Mass., along with Pat and Ray Levasseur, in 1988 and 1989 for seditious conspiracy and RICO. The jury refused to convict us. In Dec. 1991, I was convicted of killing state trooper Lomonco in 1981 after my second trial on these charges in Somerville, N.J. I am to serve 45 years for the UFF actions when I finish serving my N.J. sentence of 35 years to life. As with all dedicated revolutionaries the government has caught they have tried to bury my body away in prison, while being unable to crush my spirit.

I welcome correspondence from anyone who would like to write.

Long Live Revolutionary Resistance to Imperialism and Capitalism!

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ITALIAN NATIONAL

SILVIA BARALDINI

Italian National Political Prisoner

I was raised in Italy. In my teens I joined my parents in the United States. We lived in New York City and later Washington, D.C., where my father worked at the Italian embassy. During my senior year of high school, with the encouragement of my family, I became active in opposing the escalating war against Vietnam. In June 1965 I left for the University of Wisconsin; there I continued my participation in the antiwar movement. As a member of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), I joined with tens of thousands of other young people and residents of Madison in sit-ins and take-overs of the campus. Our demands focused on ending the draft, stopping recruitment by the CIA and Dow Chemical, and the elimination of the war think-tank: the Army Math Research Center. SDS, in its organizing, emphasized solidarity with the national liberation movements of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Through my antiwar activity I came into contact with the Black Liberation Movement. The largest and longest strike at the university was led by the Black Student Union. The outcome brought open admissions to our campus and the birth of the Afro-American Studies Department. In 1969 the Black Panther Party of Illinois spoke on campus. For the first time white students were confronted with the principles of self-determination and self-defense. When its leader, Fred Hampton, was assassinated by the FBI and the Chicago Police Department in 1969, I experienced my first lesson in domestic terror and state repression.

In my junior year of college, the women in SDS organized ourselves into a caucus. This simple act of consciousness-raising forever changed my relationship to the struggle. I no longer defined myself as a supporter or solidarity worker. I was a participant

For the first time white students were confronted with the principles of self-determination and self-defense.

in a movement whose goals had to include the liberation of women and gay people.

As an organizer I was constantly confronted with the pervasiveness of racism in the U.S. Soon combating white supremacy and organizing other whites to support the liberation of New Afrikan people became the focus of my work. In 1970, I moved back to New York City and joined a city-wide effort to free 21 members of the Black Panther Party unjustly accused of conspiring against the government. For the next 12 years, the defense of New Afrikan political prisoners was at the center of my work. In 1973, I joined Friends of Assata Shakur and Sundiata Acoli. The group organized political support amongst white people for captured members of the Black Liberation Army. After a number of years I joined May 19th Communist Organization. I no longer wanted to act as an individual outside a long-term strategic direction. Representing May 19th, I traveled to Africa extensively and worked with the Zimbabwe African National Union both during the war of liberation and during reconstruction after independence in April of 1980.

In this period I became a target of COINTELPRO and the local police department enacted by the Joint Anti-Terrorist Task Force. The goal: to destroy the mounting resistance against U.S. imperialism, in particular, stop any armed action. In November 1982, I was arrested and accused of conspiracy against the U.S. government with other white and New Afrikan revolutionaries. We were charged with the liberation of Assata Shakur and other political actions.

While awaiting trial, I was subpoenaed to testify in front of a grand jury in Brooklyn, New York, investigating the Puerto Rican independence movement. I refused. I was charged with criminal contempt. I was one of the eleven political activists—Puerto Rican, New Afrikan and North American—jailed because of our noncollaboration. After two trials (for conspiracy and criminal contempt), I was found "guilty" and sentenced to a total of 43 years. Immediately thereafter, the U.S. government issued a deportation order back to Italy. In late 1984, I was moved to FCI Pleasanton. After 27 peaceful and uneventful months in general population, I was taken without warning to Lexington, Kentucky. Along with Puerto Rican prisoner of war Alejandrina Torres and political prisoner Susan Rosenberg, I became the target of an experiment in small group isolation and sensory deprivation run by the Bureau of Prisons in an underground unit. Its aim: the psychological destruction of women political prisoners. After 2 years of protest, the unit was closed. A lawsuit, filed by Susan and me, won. Judge Parker found the U.S. government guilty of violating our first amendment rights and barred the Bureau of Prisons from using political beliefs and association as the basis for transfer and association. Our health deteriorated in the unit and after my release

I had to be moved to a federal medical center in Rochester where I underwent two operations for cancer.

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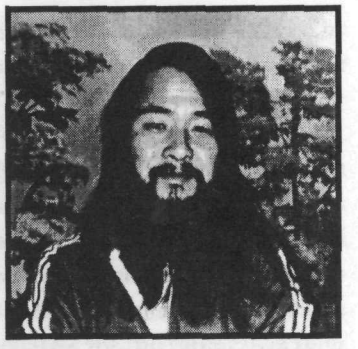
JAPANESE NATIONAL



YU KIKUMURA

Anti-Imperialist Political Prisoner

I was born on July 18, 1952 in a small village on the southern island, Kyushu, in Japan. This is a rather rural area and an important locale of Japanese mythology. It was there that I spent my youth and graduated from high school.

I am the youngest son in my family and have two sisters. My late father was a high school teacher, a militant member of the teacher's union. And he was not only a grassroots activist for anti-pollution and against capital punishment but also a very active member of a committee to support me and political prisoners in Japan.

Just after my apprehension in the U.S., he visited me in the jail in New York. That was my last time to talk to him in person. (That was the only social visit allowed me by the U.S. government during the ten years of my incarceration.) He passed away while I have been here in USP ADX Florence, Colorado. The rest of my family live in Tokyo and are supportive of my life and struggles, although have no political consciousness.

After I graduated high school, I moved to Tokyo where I was involved in the day labor movement, and in support of homeless people living in the slums. I left the activist life in Japan when I took up a new life with the struggle abroad.

I went around the world—to Europe, Asia and Africa—and that gave me a precious opportunity to experience people's struggles firsthand with the political, philosophical and historical roots of their struggle against imperialism. And then during the 80's I settled and started a business in Athens, Greece.

I went around the world—to Europe, Asia and Africa—and that gave me a precious opportunity to experience people's struggles firsthand with the political, philosophical and historical roots of their struggle against imperialism.

In May 1986, on the way to my exporting business, I was arrested at the airport in the Netherlands on the charge of attempting to smuggle explosives. After four months in custody, I was discharged, all the charges were dismissed and I was deported back to Japan. That was my first reunion with Japan after leaving her for twelve years and was the last chance I had to enjoy time with my family, just for 60 hours.

In March 1988 I arrived in New York and then traveled around the U.S. for a month. On April 12, 1988 I was arrested in New Jersey for possession of a pipe bomb in my car trunk, which was seized illegally.

In the suppression hearing on the illegal arrest, a state trooper who arrested me altogether perjured himself in his testimony, a congenital liar, one of a myriad of corrupt cops in the U.S. And a judge, corruptly oppressive to minority people and political prisoners as other U.S. judges are, decided that the trooper was reliable because he was a cop.

I was convicted for nonviolent charges, i.e. illegal possession of firearms and passport/visa violations. After the trial, at the sentencing, the government accused me of multiple attempted murder charges. The Court supported the charge in supporting the government allegations that I was a member of the "international terrorist" Japanese Red Army, relying on double hearsay evidence of a FBI informer, and that the bombs were capable of killing a score of people, relying on FBI bomb "specialist" testimony. Based on this unindicted and nonconvicted "crime" the court sentenced me to 22 years, ignoring the Federal Sentencing Guidelines of 22-34 months for conviction, obviously violating my constitutional rights to a jury trial, to be noticed by the indictment, to be proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. In short, the sentence imposed upon me was not for the crime for which I was convicted but for the six attempted murders for which I have never been charged, tried, nor convicted and am completely innocent of. This judicial manipulation against me was schemed and accomplished because the government alleged me a member of "international terrorism." And thus my case was a typical political case in which the government alleges a person as a political terrorist without affording him a charge or trial for that allegation so as to railroad him for decades because of his struggle against U.S. imperialism. Hence I recognize myself as one of the archetypal political prisoners in

...my case was a typical political case in which the government alleges a person as a political terrorist without affording him a charge or trial for that allegation so as to railroad him for decades because of his struggle against U.S. imperialism.

the u.s..

Most interestingly, after I filed a 2255 petition, the corruption of the FBI was revealed by their own member. The government report admitted that the FBI bomb "specialist" who testified at my sentencing hearing had perjured himself. Then, at the 2255 petition hearing, the district judge decided that even if his testimony was not true, the long sentence was supported by other findings (that means a mere allegation that I was a "terrorist").

Moreover, the same judge handled the 2255 petition viciously. After both parties filed all submissions to the court, eight months after my filing, the judge dismissed all those filings and ordered us to resubmit a new filing in order that the parties could answer his questions whether he could, in 2255, resentence me for 30 years which was vacated by the appellate court. After all, even the government attorney opposed it saying that no law authorizes a district judge to be able to overrule the appellate court ruling. As of January 25, 1998, the 2255 petition is pending at the Third Circuit Court.

Immediately after I was sentenced in February 1989, I was transferred to USP Marion in Illinois, and after five years there I was moved to the Federal Administrative Maximum (ADX) Prison in Florence, Colorado; both of which are the most notorious prisons in the U.S. for imprisoning prisoners who committed crimes or violated rules in the prison system and for incarcerating several notable political prisoners. The document in my central file states that the containment of me at USP ADX is because I was a member of the Japanese Red Army. In protest against this injustice of caging a political prisoner at ADX simply because of political reasons, as civil disobedience I have been rejecting their step-down program which is the only way a prisoner here can move out to a lesser level of imprisonment, showing his submissive obedience to the prison administration (U.S. government). That can not be acceptable for me as a political prisoner.

Thus, since being apprehended I have been contained in a cell for 22-23 hours every day even though I have been a model prisoner with an immaculate prison record. At Marion they rejected my Japanese materials (even letters from my family) for several years simply because they were in Japanese. For this, even the Seventh Circuit (which is one of the most conservative Federal appellate courts and has always tended to side with Marion against prisoners) decided it was unconstitutional. Around the time of this decision by the Seventh Circuit, the Marion authorities raided my cell, seized all my books and destroyed them, obviously in retaliation for that decision. I sued Marion for the book confiscation in which the record shows that they had destroyed not only the books but also a document that supports my claim, which would constitute obstruction of justice (which is a crime punishable by five years

imprisonment). Now here at ADX, they run this prison more oppressively. Among other things, they refused me a pastoral visit from a religious person on the grounds that the visit was not originally requested. How can the second visit or any future visit be possible without the original visit!!

They have carried out all this oppressive, absurd nonsense because I am an "international terrorist," a member of the Japanese Red Army, which has struggled and will struggle against U.S. imperialism.

In struggle,

Yu Kikumura

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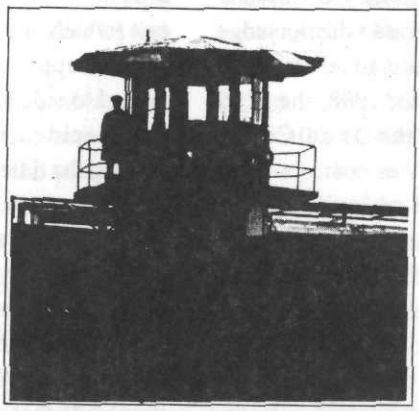
Stop The



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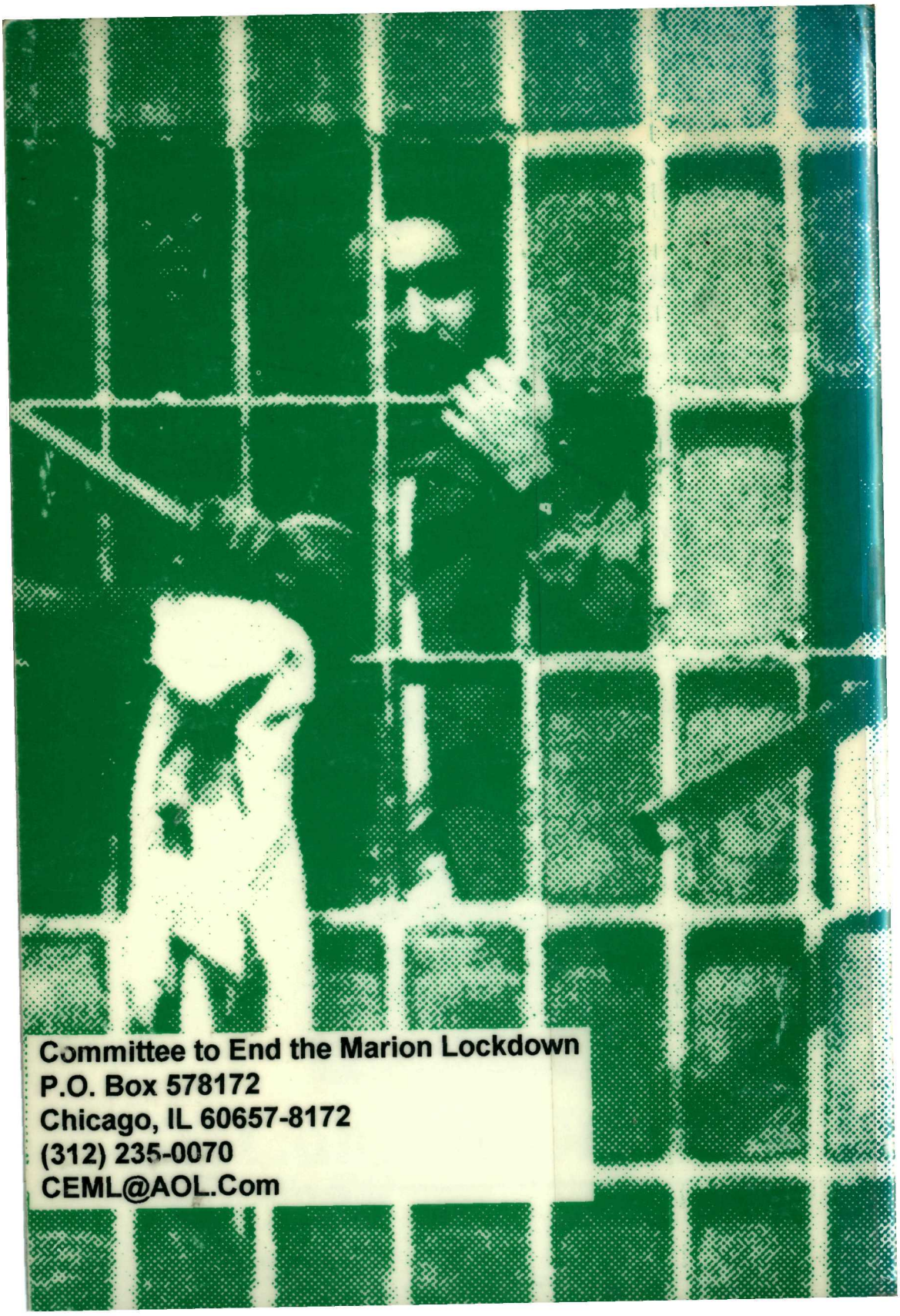

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